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The American Legion

For God and Country

Vol. 150, No. 6

The Magazine for a Strong America

JUNE 2001

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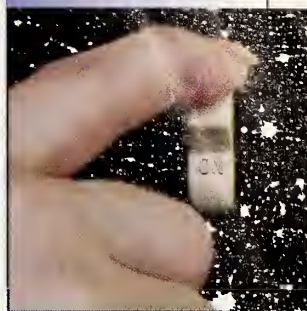
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THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.7 million members. These wartime veterans, working through 15,000 community-level Posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youth.



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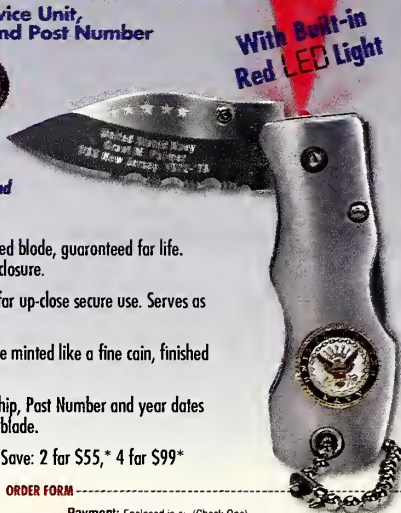
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The American Legion Magazine
P.O. Box 7068
Indianapolis, IN 46207

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Copyright 2001 by The American Legion

The American Legion (ISSN 0886-1234) is published monthly by The American Legion, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216. Periodicals postage paid at Indianapolis, IN 46204 and additional mailing offices. Annual non-member and gift subscriptions, \$15 (\$21, foreign); Post-sponsored and widows' subscriptions, \$6, single copy, \$3.50. Member annual subscription price \$3.00, which is included in annual member dues. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The American Legion, Input Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206. Internet address: <http://www.legion.org>.

Change of Address: Notify The American Legion, Input Services, P.O. Box 1954, Indianapolis, IN 46206. (317) 860-3111. Attach old address label, provide old and new addresses and current membership card number.

Canada Post International Publications Mail (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 546321. Re-entered second-class mail matter at Manila Central Post office dated Dec. 22, 1991.



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Three cheers for Rudy

Thank you for putting Master Chief Rudy Boesch on the cover of *The American Legion Magazine* ("The 'Survivor' SEAL," April). I doubt anyone is more deserving of the honor. What a great career he had. Rudy served his nation well and I salute him for it.

— Darwin C. Litzell, Woodville, Wis.



Tom Sturman

But is he a Legionnaire?

Although the article about Rudy Boesch covered his 45 years of honorable and dedicated service to the Navy and his country, it failed to state whether he is a card-carrying member of an American Legion Post.

My kudos to Rudy and his wife, Marge, for being married 43 years. That, too, is an equally impressive achievement given today's skyrocketing divorce rate.

— Mike Doyle, Pittsburgh

Editor's Note: Master Chief Rudy Boesch is a member of American Legion Post 41, Virginia.

Rudy above 'Survivor'

How could a guy like Rudy Boesch allow himself to be associated with the bunch of ding-a-lings who were depicted on "Survivor"? Here's a man with a superb record in one of the toughest military units in the world, cavorting with people I would refer to as "social misfits." Maybe money really does talk.

— Roger Price, Waupaca, Wis.

NAFTA aids drug problem

For once I have to agree with Rep. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio ("Has NAFTA Been a Success?" Big Issues, April). NAFTA has not only endangered the U.S. economy and brought more unsafe traffic onto the highways, but it has created an easier means for drug cartels to get shipments into our country. The U.S. Border Patrol can only stop, search and inspect so many

vehicles in a day; unfortunately, it can't stop all the ones smuggling drugs or other contraband. Maybe someday we'll be lucky enough to win the war on drugs, but not by allowing everybody across our borders.

— Darren Agnew, Fayetteville, Pa.

Aid for Alzheimer's

I found the article "Alzheimer's Unmasked" (April) to be informative, but something was missing: the toll-free phone number of the National Alzheimer's Association office in Chicago, (800) 272-3900. Also, it might have been helpful to suggest for readers with questions that they contact their local Alzheimer's chapter office. These phone numbers are available through the national office or the local phone book. Keep up the good work.

— Paulette C. Krewson, office manager, South Central Pennsylvania Chapter, National Alzheimer's Association, Harrisburg, Pa.

Lump sum bad idea

I found the article "Vets Favor Lump-Sum Benefits" (April) alarming. That's just what the military has been doing for years. What today may be called a minor condition can — and in most cases will — increase in severity as the years go by, depending on the disability. The military understands that if they don't get a person out before the

condition is exacerbated to the point that a 30-percent or more disability is granted, that person will retire and be on the military's income roles as long as he lives, as well as medical benefits for him and his family.

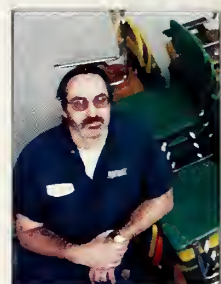
To prevent this, a superficial medical board is convened and bang — the man or woman is out of the service with a 10- or 20-percent disability. A lump-sum payment is made, and medical is pushed off on VA. I hope someone is paying attention. To allow this to happen will surely deny a person benefits he or she will need later in life.

— David L. Samuels, Killeen, Texas

Support jailed veterans

Thank you for James V. Carroll's article "Blue Caps Behind Bars" (April), which reminds us that the veterans' community extends to those serving time in our nation's prisons. While these inmates must pay their debts to society, we must remember they have earned a measure of our respect for their past service to this great country. By being Legionnaires, many are demonstrating that they are committed to rebuilding their lives and, once again, becoming productive citizens. Let's show them our support.

— The Rev. Vince Milum, Lenexa, Kan.



Tom Sturman

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS

The American Legion Magazine welcomes letters concerning articles that appear in the publication. Be sure to include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Send your opinions to:

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You can also contact us via e-mail directly or through the World Wide Web:

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Prison Post proud to serve

Thanks for the article "Blue Caps Behind Bars." Here at Missouri Eastern Correction Center, Post 900, Legionnaires also contribute to our community. We support the local women's shelter and high schools, Alcohol and Narcotics Anonymous, three state veterans' homes, the National Emergency Fund and the Cardinal Glenn Children's Hospital in St. Louis, just to name a few.

As the article says, incarcerated veterans understand and accept the fact that we have broken the law and must pay our debt to society. However, we know the majority of Americans view us as criminals, nothing more. We "blue caps" hope to show our critics we

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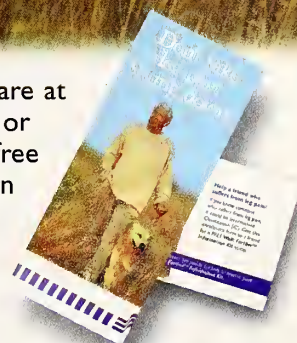
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can change, we can contribute to our communities in a positive way and that, by being Legionnaires, we can help ourselves by helping others.

We salute our colleagues at Arthur Kill in New York and are proud of their accomplishments. Keep up the good work for God and country.

— Timothy Lantz, Post 900 finance officer, Missouri East Correction Center, Pacific, Mo.

Speak up for recruiters

After reading Alan W. Dowd's article "The War for Recruits" (April), I find it unbelievable that military recruiters were denied access to high-school campuses 19,228 times in 1999. "Nothing short of an ultimatum from school or federal lawmakers will change that," Dowd concludes.

Oh yeah? Publish the names of schools that deny recruiters, and I'll bet Legionnaires put pressure on the school boards and local administrators. We might even remind them of where their paychecks come from. They'd correct the problem before the next election.

— John E. Hocking, Millersburg, Ohio

Caps off to Commander

A resounding "well done" to National Commander Ray Smith for his letter to Russian officials that helped secure the release of imprisoned American Edmond Pope ("Smith's Letter Assisted American," March). His action likely saved the life of that innocent man. Such a fine example of leadership makes me proud to be a member of The American Legion.

— Ken Wright, Palmer, Ark.

Quayle article lacks facts

Many members of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America who also are Legionnaires were dismayed to read Dan Quayle's commentary "The Trouble With Tort" (March), as it served only to perpetuate false myths about the civil

justice system. While he has served as a Congressman, Senator and Vice President, Quayle is no expert when it comes to civil justice. He didn't offer any facts from substantive, academic or neutral studies.

Quayle rails against "lotto-like awards that tempt people to file lawsuits." Individuals who have sustained paralyzing, disfiguring or life-altering injuries, and families whose children have died due to the negligent behavior of other individuals or corporations, would tell him that no amount of money could possibly compensate for those injuries or deaths.

He should know that judges not only have the discretion to reduce jury verdict awards and to throw out frivolous lawsuits and defenses, but also to punish the lawyers who offer them.

For accurate information about verdict amounts, Quayle could have consulted a recent study titled "Tort Trials and Verdicts in Large Counties, 1996," released by the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics. According to the study, punitive damages are rarely given — only 3 percent of plaintiff winners in personal-injury trials were awarded them. And the median punitive damage award, given for defendants' outrageous conduct, was only \$38,000. Among jury trials, about 18 percent of awards to plaintiff winners were reduced — by 43 percent on average.

Quayle should welcome the results of this study, since it also found an average of 11 tort trials per 100,000 people in 1996. His ambitious agenda to fix what is not broken is a poorly veiled attempt to limit the rights of injured workers and consumers — millions of them veterans — across America.

— Frederick M. Baron, president, and Leo V. Boyle, president-elect, Assoc. of Trial Lawyers of America, Washington

Put blame on lawyers

Congratulations and a proud salute to former Vice President Dan Quayle for having the courage to write such a "politically incorrect" article. No doubt lawyers in the United States have influenced the American public to dodge self-responsibility, more than any other group of professional people. When the phrase "shyster lawyer" was coined, it

pertained to 3 percent of lawyers. Now, I dare say, it pertains to 97 percent.

— S.W. "Pee Wee" Morse, Coinjock, N.C.

Use military along border

I applaud the efforts of the U.S. Border Patrol to stem the flow of illegal border crossings into the United States ("The Frontlines of Illegal Immigration," March). As is true in all admirable endeavors, the hours are long, conditions less than optimal and pay probably less than desirable.

As a member of the U.S. military, I am familiar with the El Paso region's operations, having worked in that area as part of a task force.

I do believe the military should be used along the border. I swore to defend the United States from all enemies, foreign or domestic. The influx of drugs, illegal immigrants and terrorists through our borders definitely fits that description. But any use of military personnel needs to take into consideration what the military is trained to do. It also should permit service members to take appropriate action to defend themselves, their comrades and any law-enforcement personnel they are working in conjunction with should the need arise.

Our borders on the north and south are largely unguarded through political agreements, but the people we fight against are not representatives of our neighbors' governments.

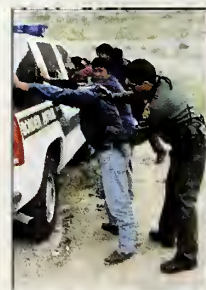
— C. Algiere, Stuttgart, Germany

Corrections

The Legion News story "VA Committee Names Chairman" (March) should have stated that rehabilitation reforms will include a law "to allow disabled military retirees to receive full disability and retirement pay and a law to allow service-connected military retirees to receive full disability and retirement pay concurrently."

The Veterans Update story "VA Expands Funeral Program" (March) should have been headlined "DoD Expands Funeral Program."

We apologize for the errors.



Tom Shattman





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Why we fight for the American flag

Nearly 12 years ago, The American Legion began peaceably assembling to petition government for redress of a serious grievance. The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled 5-4 that somewhere between the lines of the First Amendment resides a message stating that it's all right to desecrate – burn, rip, deface and commit acts too vile to mention – the very symbol of our hard-fought freedom. We adamantly disagreed with the ruling then. Still do. Always will.

The debate came up after Texas tried and convicted Gregory L. Johnson for setting fire to a U.S. Flag while chanting "America, the red, white and blue – we spit on you," during the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas. Unfortunately, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the conviction and in so doing gave Johnson's act of civil disobedience more legal protection than it gave to Old Glory and millions of offended Americans.

As the world's largest veterans organization, The American Legion is uniquely qualified to stand up for the flag. Someone once said, "For those who have fought for it, freedom has a taste that the protected will never know."

The ink was barely dry in *Texas vs. Johnson* when then-Legion National Commander H.F. "Sparky" Gierke lit the fuse on original intent. "We know in our gut this is wrong," Gierke wrote. "Surely, neither our Founding Fathers, nor our congressmen, nor anyone in the history of our great republic ever intended that anybody should be allowed to burn the very flag that has been draped on the caskets of those who died to preserve all that it represents."

Thus began a journey. Employing four of the five rights in the First Amendment as they were intended, we stated our case through letters, the media, speeches, forums and civil testimony from town halls to the U.S. Capitol.

We assembled a powerful petitioning coalition called the Citizens Flag Alliance – 141 national organizations collectively representing about 20 million people, plus another 200,000 individual members. In Congress, we have mustered bipartisan majority support – a rare feat for

any issue in Washington. Most importantly, the American people agree. According to polls, public-support levels for a flag amendment have consistently, for a decade, run at 80 percent.

Our opponents, meanwhile, are representing a different faction – primarily rebels without a brain.

For instance, on Sept. 6, 1996, in Appleton, Wis., local youths admitted stealing, burning and defecating on American flags in a series of more than 20 incidents. One flag was left with a note: "The Anarchist Platoon has invaded Appleton, and as long as you put flags up, (we're) going to burn them." What a cause.

On Memorial Day weekend 1997 in Hollywood, Fla., Vietnam War veteran Bob Gagnon asked some neighborhood teen-agers why they didn't have a flag at their house. "I was just curious," he said. The young people jeered and scoffed at Gagnon and later that evening set fire to the U.S. Flag on his lawn.

On July 5, 1999, two 18-year-old men who had recently graduated from high school joined a 15-year-old girl in burning a U.S. Flag on a street in Price, Utah. They were cited for improper burning, as if it were a backyard leaf pile that got out of hand.

Dozens of similar incidents occurred during the past decade. Often it's been teen-agers and young adults trying to bring purpose to their lives by testing the strength of that 5-4 decision – burning the flag because they can – and seeing if their stupidity and disrespect can get a rise out of us. Most of us, of course, spent our teen and young adult years fighting for bigger reasons, in strange and foreign lands, sometimes to the death. It's hard for us to understand why some people on the fringe of society choose to exercise their freedom by destroying its symbol. But I've come to realize there's just no explanation for some people.

The U.S. House of Representatives, by an accumulated margin of 927-358, has given the flag-amendment measure a two-thirds "super-majority" each of the three times a resolution has been introduced since 1995. The Senate has voted



National Commander Ray G. Smith

on flag-amendment resolutions twice in that time. The 1995 score was 63-36 in favor, three votes shy of the necessary super-majority. Last year, the Senate vote was 63-37, four votes shy.

I'm confident super-majorities in both houses of the 107th Congress will pass the single-sentence amendment introduced March 13: "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." The bill has more than 115 co-sponsors in the House and more than 40 in the Senate. If it passes this time, we'll go to the states for ratification. We will travel the high road across America and proudly present the flag's case using every tool the First Amendment affords.

"Flag burning is wrong, but what it teaches is worse," says retired Maj. Gen. Patrick Brady, Chairman of the Citizens Flag Alliance. "It teaches that the hateful conduct of a minority is more important than the will of the majority. It teaches that our laws need not reflect our values, and that the courts, not the people, own the Constitution."

That's why we fight. That's why we'll never just go away on this issue. And every step of the way, we shall make our case with pride and respect, ever mindful, ever grateful of the price Americans have paid to allow us the right.



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SHOULD CAPITAL GAINS BE TAXED?

Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz.



NO "The present tax treatment of capital gains and losses is both inequitable and a barrier to economic growth."

President George W. Bush? Actually, those were the words of Democratic President John F. Kennedy, who in 1963 proposed excluding 70 percent of capital gains from a taxpayer's taxable income.

The Kennedy plan wouldn't have eliminated the capital-gains tax, but it would have come awfully close. For those in the lowest income-tax bracket today, it would mean a rate of 4.5 percent. For those in the highest bracket, it would mean a rate of just under 12 percent.

President Kennedy understood then, as many of us do now, that if we are concerned whether new jobs are being created, whether new technology is being developed or whether workers have the tools they need to do a more efficient job, we should support measures that reduce the cost of capital. Remember, for every employee

there is an employer who took risks, made investments and created jobs. But that employer needed capital to start.

Ideally, the capital-gains tax should be eliminated. Realistically, though, that's likely to occur only in the

"Capital-gains tax rates that are set too high merely cause people to hold onto their assets to avoid the tax indefinitely. No sale, no tax."

context of a fundamental overhaul of the tax code. In the meantime, Congress could support the kind of exclusion that Kennedy proposed.

Capital-gains tax rates that are set too high merely cause people to hold onto their assets to avoid the tax indefinitely. No sale, no tax. But that means less investment, fewer new businesses, fewer new jobs and – as historical surveys show – far less revenue to the Treasury than if capital-gains tax rates were set at a lower level. Just as the local department store does not lose money on weekend sales – because volume more than makes up for lower prices – lower capital-gains tax rates can induce people to sell assets they would otherwise hold.

The last time capital-gains rates were reduced, in 1997, capital-gains revenues increased nearly 20 percent as people sold more of their assets.

Significantly reducing capital-gains rates will help individual savers and investors – people trying to plan ahead for a secure retirement or to help with their children's college expenses. It will help the economy by unlocking capital to create new businesses, expand existing ones or help American business stay competitive. And it will help the Treasury by bringing in additional revenue.

Rep. Bernard Sanders, I-Vt.



YES The issue here is very simple. Do we want to give huge tax breaks to the wealthiest people in this country, or do

we want to invest federal funds on some of the most pressing problems facing our nation, such as full funding for veterans' health care and benefits? Frankly, I regard it as obscene to be

talking about tax cuts for billionaires when veterans throughout this country are not getting the quality health care they need, are sleeping out on the streets and are waiting years to get the benefits to which they are entitled.

What readers should understand is that the current tax debate in Congress is much less about "public policy" than about "payback time" for campaign contributors. The wealthiest people in this country and the largest corporations have contributed hundreds of millions of dollars into the political process. Now they want the politicians they helped elect to lower their taxes.

Under the President's \$1.6 trillion dollar tax reduction proposal, approximately 50 percent of the benefits would go to the wealthiest 1 percent of the population, while the bottom 60 percent of the people – the folks who need help the most – would only receive 12 percent of the benefits.

Cutting capital-gains taxes is a bad idea. Capital gains are profits from selling property such as stocks, bonds and real estate. IRS statistics show that, under current law, the richest 1 percent of all tax filers receive almost two-thirds of all capital gains. In other words, a cut in capital gains taxes would mean another massive tax break for the richest Americans.

The United States is a great country but, in many ways, we are not getting our priorities right. Rather than giving more tax breaks to the wealthy, we should be concerned about extending Social Security and Medicare and making sure that every senior citizen in this country has access to affordable prescription drugs – among many other important needs.

Lastly, before we talk about tax breaks for millionaires, we should make certain that veterans do not have to beg for the benefits they were promised. According to the non-partisan Economic Policy Institute, the President's proposed budget will require a \$1.1 billion cut in veterans' benefits and services in five years. How can we talk about massive tax cuts for those who don't need them and not fulfill our promises to the men and women of this country who put their lives on the line defending us?

"A cut in capital gains taxes would mean another massive tax break for the richest Americans."

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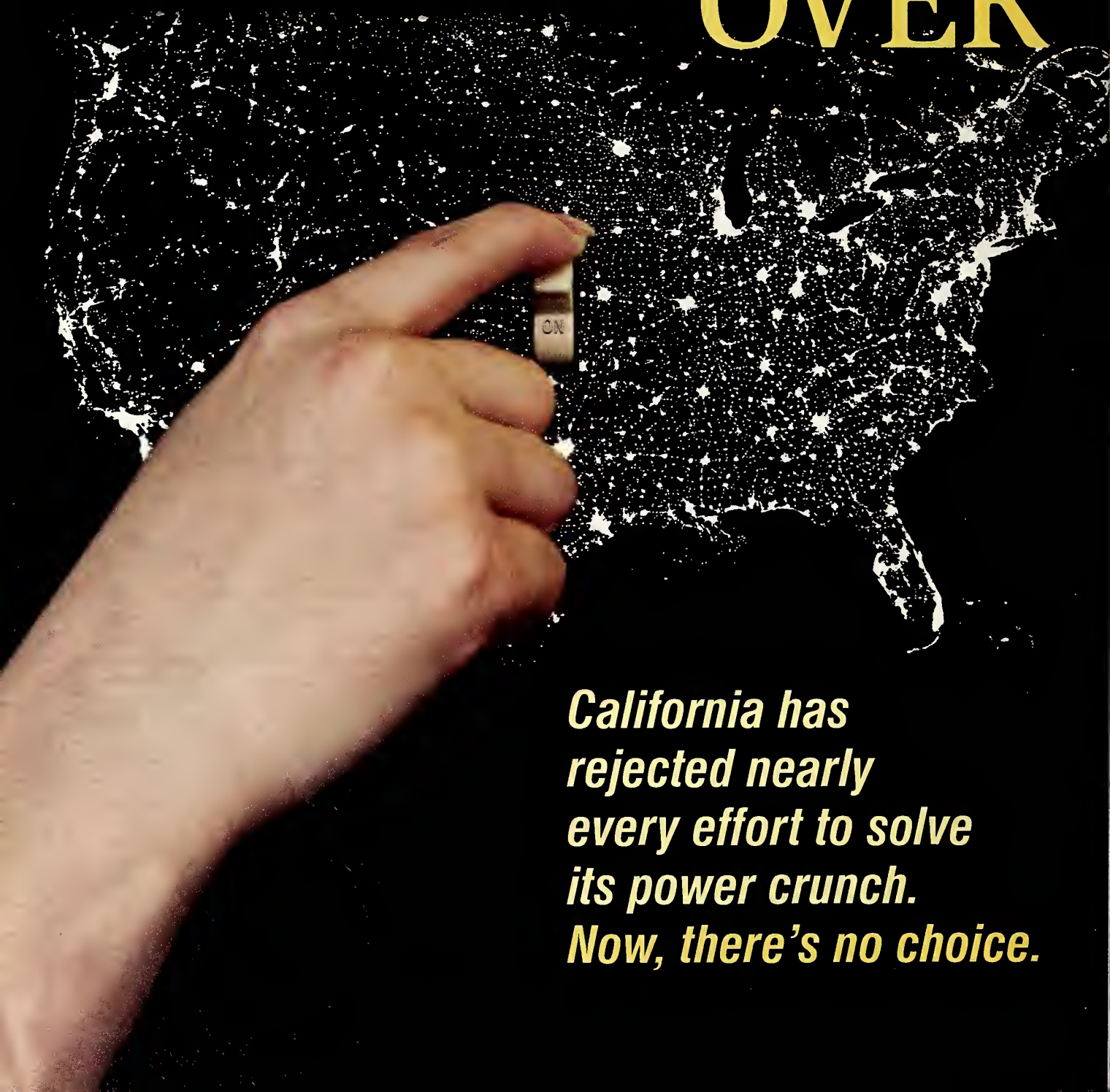
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*California has
rejected nearly
every effort to solve
its power crunch.
Now, there's no choice.*

Unless ways are found to allow and expedite new power plants, more states will become Act 2 in the national drama titled "Greenouts: An Experience Coming Soon to a Location Near You."

By Donald P. Hodel

COMMENTARY

THE ONLY SURPRISE in this past winter's power crisis in California is that it took so long to arrive. Knowledgeable observers have been shaking their heads for years over the incredible short-sightedness of California's politicians, who – beholden to the green extreme – have rejected every effort to do something about the inevitable power crunch. It arrived with a vengeance.

No Green Light. In the 1980s, I had firsthand experience working with California's political leaders to find a reasonable way to develop energy resources on and offshore. Nothing worked. Every single project was opposed as if it alone would bring the end of the earth.

These same political leaders seemed satisfied that anything California needed in the way of new power supplies could come from renewables, alternatives and conservation. These were false hopes, even then. Some leaders were smart enough to know that their positions were not reasonable, but they were unwilling to challenge their insistent and vocal green constituency.

Attempts to allow drilling for large oil reserves off the coast of California were fought tooth and nail. People who claimed the title "environmentalist" would not tolerate additional drilling platforms off their coastline.

Then-U.S. Rep. Bill Dannemeyer, with a prescience scoffed at by the green left, the liberal press and liberal politicians, said, "I would rather explain to my kids why they have to see a drilling platform the size of a ship on the horizon than to have to explain to them why they have to go fight in the Middle East to protect our energy supply." This remark generated shouts of hostility and ridicule, but it was, of course, not acknowledged in the early 1990s when Americans were engaged

in Operation Desert Storm. Our casualties were relatively light, but the costs in dollars and subsequent health problems for our veterans of that struggle have been terribly high. No one ever saw fit to revisit Dannemeyer's comment or to highlight guilt that should have been attributed to the green extreme for making it impossible to find and use domestic energy resources.

What Really Happened. Last winter, California started to experience rotating "greenouts" (the official designations are "brownouts" or "rotating blackouts"). Liberal politicians once again were quick to try to divert attention from their role in all this by attacking "deregulation." Wrong. They never tried genuine deregulation. This crisis is the result of a mistaken form of deregulation for which they were largely responsible.

California had a strong and large electric power system. It was, and is, connected to the other states in the western United States in what is called the "Western Systems Coordinating Council." Over the past decade, California's energy and peak demands have risen in the neighborhood of 20 percent, but nothing has been done to add significant new power generation. When California decided to lead the way to deregulation in the interest of lower rates, it made three major errors:

n It did not allow utilities to enter into long-term contracts for energy supplies (gas or electricity). This meant that utilities, when buying natural gas or electricity, were at the mercy of the day-to-day marketplace when prices for gas rose because of shortages.

n Although the utilities were exposed to the volatility of that marketplace and would have to pay whatever the spot market price was during a period of shortage, they were not allowed to pass those costs on to consumers. This is why the utilities, in an effort to keep the lights

on this past winter, had to pay up to eight times more for power than they could sell it for and quickly became insolvent. Since a very high percentage of the cost of electricity from gas-fired power plants is the price of gas (some say 90 percent), the losses were massive. The old joke is: "We'll lose a little on every sale and make it up on volume." Well, in this case it was, "We'll lose a whole lot on every sale and ... go broke."

n And most serious, while California "deregulated" the electric business in California and stimulated growth by its regulated low prices, it did not deregulate the business of building new power plants. As "deregulation" was occurring, many companies in and outside of California saw that there would be a need for new power plants. They came to California to build them and ran into the mentality of the 1980s – namely, total opposition to the building of anything. They got nowhere.

In the power-plant business, one finds all sorts of attitudes opposing new plants: NIMBY ("not in my backyard"), LULU ("locally undesirable land use") and BANANA ("build absolutely nothing anywhere near anything").

During this period essentially all efforts have been aimed at building natural gas-fired power plants. There are several impelling reasons: (1) natural gas has been relatively less expensive than other fuels; (2) contracts to supply it have been readily available; (3) natural gas is considered to be more environmentally benign, thereby potentially reducing opposition to the plant; (4) physically, the plants can be built quite rapidly (perhaps 12 months from construction start to operation for peaking, or "simple cycle" units, and around 30 months for "combined cycle" plants); and (5) the conventional alternatives, coal and nuclear, are not viable in today's political climate.

Nuclear power is under such attack that utilities all over the United States are struggling, sometimes unsuccessfully, simply to keep them open and operating in the face of enormous opposition. In

that atmosphere one would have to be extremely optimistic, masochistic or rich even to think about trying to build a nuclear plant. Coal plants could meet the current air quality standards and should be built, but there are problems and a solution, which are described later in this article.

Strangely, even after the crisis arrived, and the governor, in fall 2000, said he wanted to speed up the production of new power plants, nothing seemed to happen. No speed-up occurred, or so it has seemed to some plant sponsors attempting to get an additional 16 power plants approved and under construction. The earliest of these should begin producing additional electricity by late 2001 or early 2002. Clearly too little, too late.

Furthermore, the governor ought to be embarrassed by his failure to act sooner in requesting an EPA exemption on emission limits for existing power plants that were available but could not operate because they had reached their emission limits. It took the governor weeks to request this exemption, which was favored by even some of the leading less extreme environmental leaders. Some speculate the governor hesitated for fear of being criticized by environmentalists, and in so doing probably cost the state government about \$200 million extra. This emission exemption alone added about 4,000 megawatts of generation, which would have been

enough to alleviate most of the brownouts that occurred over the winter.

More Brownouts Ahead. Summer, almost upon us, will see more brownouts unless several things happen: Emission limits continue to be exceeded in times of crisis, hydropower supplies are abundant, and purchases of power from adjacent states continue to expand.

The plan for exemption from emission limits is quite reasonable. Excess emissions will have to be "paid back" when the crisis is abated by operating the plants below allowable emission limits. This "banking" of credits may have to continue for at least the next 18 to 24 months while new power plants are being built. Hopefully, this year's excellent snow pack in the Sierra Nevada mountains will melt slowly, optimizing the production of hydropower and filling hydroelectric reservoirs.

It should be noted that not all the power problems are due to lack of generation. Some come from lack of transmission. Southern California may have an excess of power, but it can't get to the north where it is needed because transmission lines to carry the power are inadequate.

Unfortunately, the same head-in-the-sand approach to energy has been extended to the needs for new transmission capacity. Work is now under way on projects that may help, but what Cal-

ifornians really need to do is take a comprehensive look at optimal transmission requirements and then make a commitment to build them as quickly and cheaply as possible in a manner that is consistent with legitimate environmental standards.

The governor's sudden decision in January to obtain authority from the legislature for the state to buy power and to sell it to the utilities at a reduced price shows the hazards of apparently working without a plan and trying to be all things to all people. The two major utilities fell more than \$11 billion short of covering their costs in just a year. The state will incur that same general level of expense over revenues if it subsidizes the consumers. How long will it take even a rich state like California to go bankrupt at that rate?

Some believe that the governor's real intention and that of the environmentalists is to put California smack-dab in the middle of the power business. It can be safely guaranteed that the long-term consequences of such an act will be a less dynamic and less efficient power system than the one they would have if they simply corrected the errors made in deregulating.

Not Just California's Problem. One way or the other, it is reasonable to expect that California will slowly claw its way out of the power-shortage business

California Responds

Since the restructuring of its electricity market, California's energy shortages and high costs have dominated the news. Yet all too often, news and commentaries about California's power situation have been inaccurate. Unfortunately, we see these same inaccuracies have surfaced in Mr. Hodel's observations about California's energy crises.

It is a gross oversimplification to reduce the issue to partisan accusations, "environmentalism" or simple shortsightedness. This is a very complex problem that deserves careful crafting of effective public policy solutions, not worn-out clichés about environmentalism and free market capitalism.

Rocketing demand through the western states have been driven by robust economic growth. One in eight Americans now lives in California. Neighboring states have seen rapid population growth and are consuming more and selling less power.

In the 1990s before the state's electricity generation industry was restructured, the California Energy Commission certified 11 power plants. Of these, three were never built due to market conditions. Eight plants are now in operation producing 952 megawatts of generation.

Since April 1999, the commission has licensed nine new

power plants with a combined generation of 6,278 megawatts. Six of these plants, with a combined generation of 4,308 megawatts, are now under construction with 2,368 megawatts expected to be on-line by the end of 2001.

Under Gov. Gray Davis' administration, another 16 power plants – with a generating capacity of 7,134 megawatts – are already in the Energy Commission's siting process. Clearly, the energy industry still views California as a world-class marketplace, an important part of aggressive business plans for a new century, and a promising arena in which environmental and economic concerns are kept in balance.

Only with a clear understanding of the problem can we make progress toward an equitable solution. It would be wise to pay close attention to California's progress toward an equitable solution. Gov. Davis' commitment to establishing a template for efficient and economical power production and delivery may well become a benchmark as other states head down the path of deregulation.

– Steve Larson
Executive Director
California Energy Commission

sometime in the next two years through a combination of good ideas (more power plants, emission exemptions in time of crisis, more transmission, increased conservation, full-cost pricing to consumers) and bad ideas (efforts to governmentalize the system, state subsidies of power costs, state interference in the management of utilities).

One thing is clear, though. The federal government did not cause this problem and it should not try to solve it, for it would assuredly do an even worse job than California has done.

A question that naturally comes to mind is: How are other parts of the country doing? Well, unfortunately, in some places – particularly the Northeast – conditions look appallingly like California. Opposition to every sort of new power plant or transmission requirement and “deregulation” California-style seem to be in vogue. Thus, unless ways are found to allow and expedite new power plants, more states will become Act 2 in the national drama titled “Greenouts: An Experience Coming Soon to a Location Near You.”

Every state and region ought to be looking seriously at how it compares to California. Then, if the state is determined to be at risk, steps should be taken immediately to encourage the building of power plants and transmission lines. Perhaps states will be able to overcome the resistance of the green left because of all the publicity given to what has happened in the West. If so, they may be able to avoid duplicating what happened there. If not, we’ll see replays in various parts of the country soon, depending on temperature extremes. The fact is that electric demand cannot be allowed to grow and grow without doing something about building new generation. Thanks to the high-tech era we’re in, an adequate and reliable supply of electrical energy at an affordable price has never been more important to our economy.

Staying On Top. Nationally, what we need to come to grips with sooner rather than later is simple: We shouldn’t put all our eggs in the single basket of natural gas-fired power plants. An unlimited supply of readily available and cheap natural gas doesn’t exist. In fact, the rapidly rising price of natural gas has caused much of the current economic problem in California.

The United States is one of the world’s richest coal countries. Billions have been spent perfecting “clean-coal

The Economics of Energy

Energy is “pervasive.” It is in everything we do and buy, either as part of the material, the manufacturing or the transportation.

It affects our personal travel, whether we drive, fly or ride. It is absolutely crucial to the functioning of the information age and the communications network. In short, energy is everywhere and in everything in our modern world.

Now imagine what happens when “energy prices” go up even a little. The multiplying effect is much greater than if the price of a food item, paper, light bulbs or any household supplies increase in price. A 1-percent increase in the price of any item has a 1-percent impact on buyers of that commodity.

On the other hand, a 1-percent increase in energy prices affects the cost of building the plant that generates the power, the lines that transmit it, the factory that manufactures the product, the wages of the people who work in the factory (they will require additional pay to cover higher transportation and living costs), the cost of manufacturing the product, the cost of packing materials, the cost of transporting, and finally the costs (wages, heating, cooling, lighting) of the retail stores that sell

it. That 1-percent increase is multiplied five, 10 or maybe 15 times.

This is why we saw an impact that was inexplicable to some when OPEC first raised the price of oil in 1973. The runaway inflation and unemployment that hit us in the late 1970s, called “stagflation,” was significantly caused by the OPEC “oil tax,” as some called it.

The only way to ensure we remain in charge of our energy future is to develop and use our own domestic energy resources. We have a great deal of oil and natural gas still to be discovered. We need to stop locking up those resources. We have enormous reserves of coal (perhaps 500 to 1,000 years worth at a minimum, if we used it for electricity). But these are of no use to us if the U.S. government refuses to allow exploration, development and use of them, as is now the case.

It is time for the majority of Americans who understand the need for electricity – and all other forms of energy – to assert themselves and insist their representatives in Congress, statehouses and legislatures do right by them and their future energy needs by allowing production of domestic resources.

– D.P.H.

technology.” Today, it is possible to build a coal-fired power plant that will meet the EPA standards for clean air emissions. But almost no plants are being built. Why? Largely because investors in power plants have to reckon with the possibility that while a plant is being permitted and built, perhaps a six-to eight-year process, the good ol’ EPA just might change the standards as they have done before.

With hundreds of millions of dollars invested, a power plant might not be allowed to run, or it might have to run “derated,” meaning it would run at a smaller output, jeopardizing the economics and possibly ensuring the plant will never return the investors’ money. Not many investors would consider taking such a risk.

However, at least one fairly simple fix for this problem exists. Congress and the state legislatures in those states where coal plants might be built need to pass legislation allowing the appropriate

agency – the EPA, the Department of Energy at the federal level and the equivalent agencies at the state level – to enter into a contract with the builders of coal plants. That contract must provide that if the rules change, and those changes reduce the value of the plant, the government will reimburse the builder for the difference. More importantly, such a provision would allow America once again to start using one of its most abundant and cheap domestic resources to supply the energy requirements of this nation. America is not short of energy. It has been short of the will to find it and use it. □



Donald P. Hodel is a former Secretary of Energy and former Secretary of the Interior under President Reagan.

Article design: Holly K. Soria

FATHERHOOD **UNDER FIRE**



Is 'Dad' America's most endangered species?

By Alan W. Dowd

Hang up the baseball glove and put away the bedtime stories. No need to take that long walk with your daughter or have that long talk with your son. Keep the advice and hugs to yourself, and don't worry about coming home. If you're a father, you're no longer wanted or needed in 21st-century America.

This news may come as a shock with another Father's Day upon us, but it's just some of what Louise Silverstein and Carl Auerbach concluded in a jaw-dropping study on fathers and fatherhood aptly titled "Deconstructing the Essential Father." Published in *American Psychologist*, a journal of the American Psychological Association, the study's radical conclusions further undermine what was once beyond debate — the idea that fathers play a crucial role in the health of families and children. Still sending shockwaves through public-policy circles more than a year after its initial publication, the study is just one of countless indicators that "Dad" is an endangered species.

Dangerous Dads? Chipping away at some of our most basic conceptions of parenting, the APA study declares that fathers are not essential to child well-being; the institution of marriage does not serve the broader interests of society; divorce is not necessarily harmful to children; fathers contribute nothing special to child development; and the traditional family unit — headed by a

mother and father — is not any better at protecting children than anything else. In other words, fathers are no longer relevant.

"Addressing the problem of absent fathers must be a national priority because it impacts the well-being of America's children, families and communities."

— Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind.

COMMENTARY

America's 25 million fatherless children might disagree. However, as Dr. Timothy Dailey, an analyst with the Family Research Council, uncovered in his cogent response to the APA study, Silverstein and Auerbach go beyond merely arguing that fathers are irrelevant: "The authors actually suggest that the traditional father can be harmful in the home," a flabbergasted Dailey explains.

In fact, in their view, "dear old Dad" is downright destructive and dangerous. Taking their counter-intuitive argument to the extreme, Silverstein and Auerbach contend that the traditional two-parent model of the family "fails to acknowledge the potential costs of father presence." According to Silverstein and Auerbach, many fathers do little more than waste family resources on gambling, alcohol and other vices.

Of course, fathers guilty of that kind of selfishness are out there, but they are the exception. Even so, it is that model of imperfection which seems to drive Silverstein and Auerbach's research. Given such a brutish and bleak picture of the typical father, it's easy to see why they arrive at their skewed conclusions.

But what would make them draw such a depressing caricature of the American father? A recent study by the National Fatherhood Initiative, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the number of children growing up with responsible fathers, has a possible answer: television.

"Today's most powerful cultural institution is television [and] children are its most ardent consumers," the NFI study begins. "Given the current scope of fatherlessness, it is no exaggeration to say that for millions of children the primary contact they have with the idea of a father is the time they spend watching a father on television."

Regrettably, what they usually see is similar to the distortion offered by Silverstein and Auerbach. The NFI study found that TV fathers are eight times more likely to be shown in a negative light than TV mothers. "On television," the study concludes, "fathers are less involved, provide less moral guidance, are less competent and place less of a priority on the family than do mothers."

NFI found that fully 65 percent of Hollywood's depictions of fatherhood provide either ambiguous or negative portrayals. In fact, 26 percent of the portrayals are completely negative. "This overabundance of 'bad dads' on television undermines a cultural ideal of responsible fatherhood at a time when that ideal is most needed," according to NFI's researchers.

Grim Numbers. From academia to pop culture, fatherhood is obviously under assault. What's happening to fathers and families is truly sobering. Indeed, the consequences of Dad's disappearance from America's family landscape illustrate how disconnected from reality Silverstein and Auerbach are.

Numbers and statistics sometimes distort the facts, but on rare occasions they truly illuminate. This is such an occasion.

Almost 25 million children live without fathers; 4 million don't even know who their fathers are; and 33 percent of the babies born in America today will be the sole responsibility of unmarried mothers.

Indeed, during the past three decades, fathers have disappeared from America faster than the spotted owl. According to the Family Research Council, 85 percent of all children lived in two-parent families in 1968. In 1980, it was 77 percent. Today, it's just 68 percent and falling. During those 30 years, the number of single-parent families in the United States quadrupled; the number of two-parent families inched up by just 8 percent.

"This overabundance of 'bad dads' on television undermines a cultural ideal of responsible fatherhood at a time when that ideal is most needed."

— National Fatherhood Initiative

This destabilizing trend of single-parenthood is continuing as we enter the 21st century. According to the Forum on Child and Family Statistics, a research arm of the federal government, birth rates have increased sharply for unmarried women in every age group during the past 20 years. And there's no evidence that what some have called "the epidemic of fatherlessness" will end.

Counting the Costs. This explosive increase in fatherless homes may seem irrelevant to traditional families or those who have already raised their children, but it isn't. In fact, it should send chills down their spines: Like a scythe, fatherlessness is cutting a swath of destruction through our nation that touches every American. Indeed, to look at these numbers is to look at the root cause of America's most intractable problems.

An ancient proverb warns, "When a father gives to his son, both laugh; when a son gives to his father, both cry." The children of absentee fathers are now paying back their parents and society for what they have been given – and deprived of – during the past 30 years. Their pain and anger are wreaking havoc with our country. And if we are not moved by their plight, we should at least be moved by self-interest. The longer the epidemic continues, the more profound and costly the consequences for every American.

According to Robert Maginnis, a specialist on fatherhood and family, fatherless kids are two times more likely to quit high school than those from two-parent families. They are 70 percent more likely to be kicked out of school, and 10 times more likely to abuse alcohol and other drugs.

The Forum on Child and Family Statistics found that children in one-parent households "are substantially more likely" to live in poverty. To be exact, they are five times more likely to live in poverty when compared to children lucky enough to be living with a mother and a father.

But the consequences of Dad's disappearance aren't limited to economics or education. In most cases, the legacy of an absentee father is criminal behavior in his children.

"The likelihood that a young male will engage in criminal activity doubles if he is raised without a father," Maginnis said. No less than 72 percent of teen-age murderers grow up without a dad. And according to Cato Institute research, a 1-percent increase in births to single mothers triggers a 1.7-percent increase in violent crime. In fact, the Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization has found that children from fatherless homes are 20 times more likely to end up in prison as their two-parent counterparts.

This should not be misunderstood as an attack on single mothers. Single moms are among the most creative and courageous people in America today. Working two and three jobs outside the home, they face the toughest job on earth inside the home alone. Many of their children grow up to be productive members of society. But the odds are against them. Most of their children will be forever scarred by Dad's absence and will pass the cycle of brokenness on to another generation. The old saying "like father, like son" is all too true.

Nor is this an endorsement of the misguided notion that any father – regardless of his behavior – is preferable to no father at all. The health and safety of a child or mother should never be sacrificed for the sake of a marriage. Indeed, it's better for some fathers to leave, but today one-third of them are walking away. That's far too many. Children grow up best when Mom and Dad raise them together. Ninety percent of single moms agree, and so do their kids, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Turning Point? Thankfully, a handful of people and organizations are fighting for America's fathers and families. Were it not for them, there would be fewer of both.

Groups such as NFI, the Family Re-

search Council, the Initiative for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization, and hundreds of other nonprofits are partnering with churches and public agencies to promote fatherhood and thereby protect mothers and their children from the long odds faced by fatherless homes. And their influence is being felt beyond the family room. After decades of indifference and outright contempt for fathers, the federal government is finally realizing the necessity of fathers and the value of two-parent families.

The examples abound – from the Department of Health and Human Services' Fatherhood Initiative to stronger child-support laws, from high-tech, interstate tracking of deadbeat dads to a wide array of pro-fatherhood legislation in Congress.

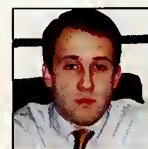
As Sen. Evan Bayh, D-Ind., recently observed, "Addressing the problem of absent fathers must be a national priority because it impacts the well-being of America's children, families and communities." And since families are the building blocks of society, the epidemic of fatherlessness impacts the well-being of America itself.

Bayh's Responsible Fatherhood Act of 2000, which he co-wrote with Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., sought to develop an information clearinghouse to help states and agencies promote responsible fatherhood. The bill also would have reworked key aspects of the federal-state welfare system "to encourage the formulation and maintenance of two-parent families." However, the measure died in the Senate Finance Committee last year.

The Fathers Count Act proposed by Rep. Nancy Johnson, R-Conn., would have provided grants to promote marriage and assist struggling fathers in job training. The bill also sought to ease some of the eligibility criteria on the Welfare-to-Work program. The bill passed the House with 328 votes. But it succumbed to the same fate as the Bayh-Domenici bill.

Congress clearly has plenty of ground to make up. Even so, perhaps the nation has reached a critical turning point. As NFI president Wade Horn notes, "Virtually everyone now agrees: Fathers matter."

Everyone, that is, except Hollywood and the APA. □



Alan W. Dowd is a freelance writer and a former associate editor of The American Legion Magazine.

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Making the Pieces Fit

America needs a cohesive national security strategy.

By David Abshire

When Presidents Truman and Eisenhower gathered their national-security experts at the outset of the Cold War, there was clear national consensus for sweeping change to meet the challenges that lay ahead.

Today, well into the second decade of the post-Cold War era, the United States has yet to fully adapt to the present and future demands placed upon its national-security structure. Now that the complex nature of our new world is becoming clear – as well as a national consensus to actively engage it – presidential leadership enjoys a rare opportunity to reform the national-security decision-making architecture.

Although substantive reform appears

to be a priority of the new administration, a comprehensive look at the whole national-security apparatus would help reformists break out of the traditional box of vertical reform one stovepipe institution at a time. Now is a time for lateral reform that considers the interconnectedness of our national-security system. If the military is over-extended, as the President said during the 2000 campaign, reforming only the Department of Defense is a minimalist

approach that squanders a rare opportunity for sweeping and needed change.

If we look closely, a weakened State Department, a traumatized intelligence community, a disorganized National Security Council and a reactive national-security posture held over from the Cold War all contribute to the dispiriting pace at which we put our young men and women in harm's way.

Preparing for Cold War. "Rely on planning," Eisenhower would say, "but never trust plans." Eisenhower recognized the importance of strategy as well as its limits. The National Security Act of 1947, which Eisenhower helped draft as Army chief, created a Department of Defense and a unified intelligence community as the tools to fight the Cold War. The tools were there, but the strategy for using them was not.

When Eisenhower became President, the country was guided by monumental new developments. The National Security Act of 1947 created the National Security Council, the CIA, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In 1950, the top-secret NSC 68 report was the Cold War order recommending the build-up of U.S. arms in the event of war with the U.S.S.R. The communist takeover of China, along with atomic bomb testing by the Soviets, elevated the urgency of NSC 68.

In the report, Paul Nitze, head of the State Department policy planning staff, delivered a daunting description of a coming year of "maximum danger." The year was 1954. Eisenhower knew he needed more than military might to confront that danger.

To keep from succumbing to a strait-jacketed approach, Eisenhower decided to take a fresh look at how the nation's forces were deployed and its resources allocated. He convened three competing teams in the White House Solarium and tasked them over a three-month period with reappraising the nation's plans for the Cold War. The Solarium Exercise, as it came to be called, gave birth to the "Long Haul" strategy to contain Soviet expansion on multiple fronts. Subsequent presidents followed this strategy with only minor modifications.

Eisenhower's Long Haul included two revolutionary developments that shed light on the challenges of today's strategic environment: In pursuing a containment strategy, he recognized the long-term nature of such a plan and its inevitable impact on and susceptibility

COMMENTARY

David Abshire, a former Assistant Secretary of State and ambassador to NATO, served in President Reagan's cabinet as special counselor. He is president of the Center for the Study of the Presidency in Washington, D.C.



to the nation's economic health.

For Eisenhower's plan to work, new decision-making mechanisms had to be developed that would include planning capability in order to anticipate problems. In the State Department, Eisenhower had a strong policy planning staff that already focused on the road ahead. But in the White House he lacked this capacity and, by revamping the NSC to include it, his genius came out. Eisenhower separated the NSC staff into two groups: the Planning Board, walled off from the crises of the moment and focused on long-range thinking, and the Operations Coordinating Board, which focused on implementing NSC directives.

Back to the Future. During the Cold War, when the enemy was so clearly defined, when the nation was so completely unified and when the threat of conflict was so high, our military – aside from Korea and Vietnam – was actively engaged far less than in the relatively short period since the Soviet collapse. U.S. interventions have increased four-fold since the end of the

"A central weakness of today's national security decision-making process is the lack of any long-range strategic planning capability and the absence of a strong economic component."

Cold War, and the expected "peace dividend" is still difficult to define.

A central weakness of today's national security decision-making process is the lack of any long-range strategic planning capability and the absence of a strong economic component.

A recent nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office report warns that, to sustain the U.S. military at current spending levels, our forces will need to be reduced by 25 percent. Otherwise, Congress and the President will need to appropriate an additional \$50 billion a year to fill the gap.

But the root problem is not with the Pentagon; it begins with our preventive and diplomatic capabilities that have been stripped bare.

The imbalance between defense and diplomacy illustrates a pivotal disadvantage. In 1948, the spending ratio of defense to diplomacy was 2:1. During the Cold War it shifted to 16:1. Twelve years into the post-Cold War period, it remains 16:1. Today's mismatch is coupled with an alarming flight of talent from a State Department cut off at the knees. These trends reveal a systemic misguided investment resulting from the absence of the strategy and the resources to prevent conflict in the new century. As a consequence, our military will be asked increasingly to act as the fire brigade because we failed to invest in fire prevention.

Having a seasoned general head up the State Department is a welcome development. Revitalizing it requires strong leadership, which we'll find in its deputy, Rich Armitage, as well. What matters most, however, is changing the State Department's culture to reintegrate it into the entire national-security process.

Moving the formulation of foreign policy out of the NSC and back into State with an empowered policy planning staff is important, but we must not sideline the responsibilities of the State Department to also act as the voice of America abroad. The U.S. Information Agency is a crucial arrow in the quiver of America's preventive power. Hobbling USIA is a sure way to worsen the image we have in the eyes of our allies and partners abroad. Indications of this are plentiful with the globalization backlash and the failing sanctions against Iraq, where our public diplomacy initiatives have slumped and resolve abroad has thinned to the point of abandonment by many former supporters.

"Our military will be asked increasingly to act as the fire brigade because we failed to invest in fire prevention."

One fundamental misjudgment of the post-Cold War's first decade is a tendency to reinforce strengths while neglecting weaknesses. Defining a national-security strategy today requires a comprehensive look at critical deficiencies – emergent weaknesses needing to be identified and shored up – and strengths that should be maintained rather than continually refortified to the neglect of preventive measures.

To borrow from the great 20th century political essayist Isaiah Berlin, our country needed the single-mindedness of a hedgehog during the years of Cold War. America had to remain focused on a visible foe, which required a linear strategy and threatened mostly vertical military escalation. Today, the United States faces significant differences and must adapt first by identifying new vulnerabilities.

To engage the post-Cold War environment, we need the multifaceted mind of the fox. Because power in the world is more diffuse, intelligence is more open and defining our national interests is more difficult, a new strategy is needed – new strategy that accommodates Eisen-

The National Security Act of 1947

Political scientists might call it a "policy window" – a short breath-catching span of time between crises when undistracted public officials can make monumental changes. For President Harry Truman, a policy window opened just after the end of World War II in 1945. He filled it by reconstructing America's national-security framework.

Months of post-war negotiation, coalition-building and compromise came down to the stroke of Truman's pen while aboard the presidential aircraft "Sacred Cow." On July 26, 1947, he signed the National Security Act, arguably the most significant piece of defense legislation since the creation of the Navy Department in 1798.

The wide-ranging act conceived the National Security Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the CIA, the U.S. Air Force and the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Its purpose was to create a cohesive brain trust among military and foreign-policy leaders. Unification among the U.S. land, sea

and air forces was a key feature – both a response to the lessons of World War II and a strategy to reduce peacetime defense spending while simultaneously building a better military machine. Deeply committed to the idea, Truman first had to get past the interests of the War Department and the Navy, neither of which wanted a diminished role, before putting the policy up for debate in Congress. Minor changes aside, the policy Truman envisioned emerged intact.

The National Security Act was modified at various stages during the second half of the 20th century, but its structure and essence still stand. Both in terms of military success and foreign-policy execution, the National Security Act might have had its greatest moment 44 years later in the fully integrated Gulf War victory.

In any event it may be one of Truman's most enduring contributions to global peace through American strength.

– Jeff Stoffer

hower's warning by avoiding the pursuit of policies at the expense of agility.

How We Are Organized. While organization does not ensure successful policy, disorganization will almost certainly

bring inefficiency and failure. The astounding frequency of post-Cold War interventions is a symptom of a far worse problem, namely an overly compartmentalized national security structure. Pervasive compartmentalization has led to overlapping responsibilities, jurisdictional turf fights and stove-piped investments that invariably delay decisions, thwart prevention and smother innovation.

Compounding the problems of compartmentalization is a transfer in resources from preventive mechanisms (the State Department) to those that react to crises. One result of the wide funding gap between diplomacy and defense is the concentration of foreign-policy decision-making in the White House. An overly influential NSC has led to a muting of the Secretary of State and an inherently reactive posture.

Nowhere is compartmentalization more a problem than within the Department of Defense, but Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's decision to review DoD with the help of the Defense Science Board, Joint Vision 2020 from the Joint Chiefs and Andrew Marshall is a step in the right direction. Congress is generally pleased with the decision to take a step back and look at



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the big picture, but herein lies a rare opportunity for the administration to learn from Truman and Eisenhower by taking an even broader look at the entire national-security complex.

Adapting to the Future. One of the central tenets of strategy is unity of effort. For the President to lead in overhauling a badly disorganized structure, he will need the support of Congress. To accomplish this, reform measures need to be placed into an overall strategic package that brings the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the NSC, the Intelligence Community and even the Departments of Commerce and Treasury together in a coherent framework.

A blueprint for charting such reform could be similar to Eisenhower's Solarium Exercise and the review initiated by the Secretary of Defense. It should be a strategic assessment, in this case led by Vice President Dick Cheney, to reconfigure our national-security institutions and investment strategies to meet the new challenges in diplomacy, intelligence, finance, trade and defense. The assessment should be a public document that drives reform by looking at our strengths and vulnerabilities, how we shape the changing global environment, our anticipatory capabilities and information dominance, the science and technology policies that drive innovation, and our public diplomacy posture and tools. An important ingredient in such an examination is an outside per-

"While organization does not ensure successful policy, disorganization will almost certainly bring inefficiency and failure. The astounding frequency of post-Cold War interventions is a symptom of . . . an overly compartmentalized national-security structure."

spective, thus private-sector expertise should be brought into the process.

A starting point for institutional reform is the State Department. As an intended first line of defense, its purpose is to defuse problems before they arise, warn of imminent threats and help end unavoidable conflicts. With a denuded State Department, none of these responsibilities can be effectively assumed. The State Department needs to be reintegrated into the national-security complex as the chief instrument of prevention. To further adapt the Eisenhower model, it would benefit from an empowered policy planning staff to focus on long-range planning as opposed to speech-writing and crisis management, as it so often does today.

The Department of Defense will need to focus its efforts beyond readiness and morale. A pay raise and full-scale modernization efforts are absolutely needed, and Marshall's reports to Rumsfeld will likely shed light on these requirements. The next essential step, however, is overcoming extensive compartmentalization and misguided investment strategies for achieving coherence. Among the various measures to achieve this, a greater State-Defense synergy is necessary. For example, where Defense has assigned its commanders in chief abroad, the Department of State's regional assistant secretaries overlap and are disjointed. The CINCs and the regional assistant secretaries of state are the experts that need to communicate and share informa-

tion for better planning.

Political-military crises are on par with economic and financial emergencies. As a result, bringing the Departments of Commerce and Treasury into scope is crucial for a truly strategic reform.

A common thread in adapting to the realities of the post-Cold War is restoring an institutionalized capability for long-term strategic planning. A refocused NSC staff that emphasizes coordination and forward planning should be the fulcrum. But a group of experts from outside of government could advise the President on alternative approaches to future contingencies and long-range planning. This outside group could replace the narrowly focused President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board with a team of private-sector leaders and seasoned geo-strategists chaired by the Vice President. Such a board, perhaps named the President's Strategic Advisory Board, would remain separate from operations and involve members of the President's cabinet and sub-cabinet only in a consultative manner to help guide dialogue.

Opportunities for Change. The importance of presidential leadership in bringing about overarching reform cannot be overstated. Furthermore, working with Congress to generate a truly national strategy would facilitate consensus.

After the recent election, combined with a narrowly divided Congress, most ambitious legislative initiatives are meeting with considerable resistance. Reforming the national-security complex, however, is a priority with solutions that people on both sides of the aisle and on either end of Pennsylvania Avenue can work toward together. For its part, Congress would find it in its own interest to work with the new administration by offering its views on certain areas of reform, perhaps through a working group or a new joint committee on national-security reform.

The need to organize for the future is clear. So also is the scale on which it is needed. If President Bush seizes the moment of this historical opportunity for comprehensive reform, our military deployments will not only decrease, but our leadership abroad, our resources for agility and our decision-making process will be significantly enhanced for the new challenges that lie ahead. □

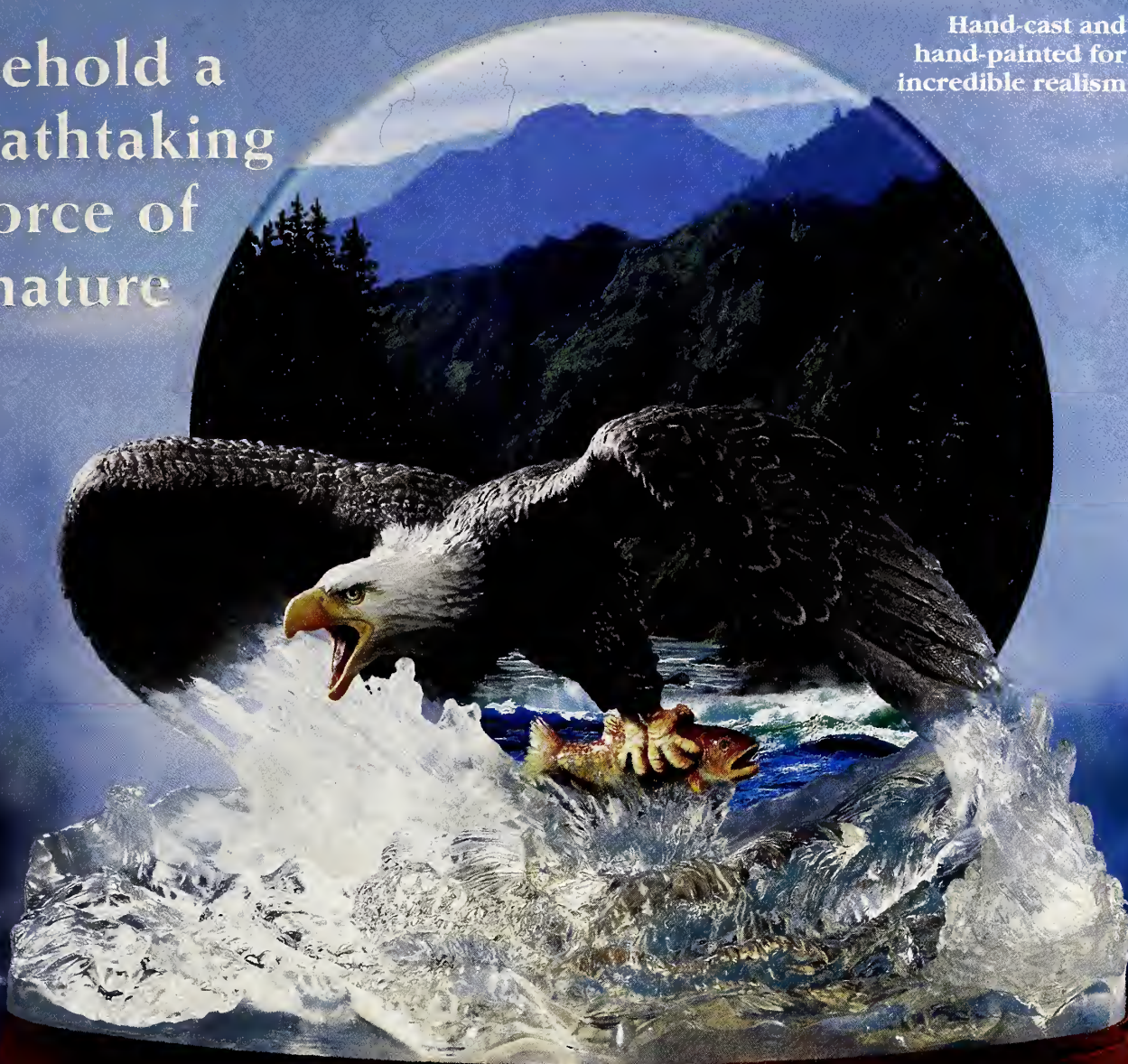
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Condoleezza Rice, chief foreign-policy adviser in the George W. Bush administration, has already made an impact by streamlining the National Security Council and fixing its focus on defense strategy and international economics.

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Two political analysts engage in A Taxing Debate



Tax cuts can heal ailing economy

By Paul A. Gigot

THE U.S. TREASURY is overflowing with cash, the tax burden is higher than it's ever been in peacetime and now the economy has begun to slow. If America's politicians won't cut taxes now, when will they?

That's the salient question to ponder while Congress debates tax-cut proposals. The case for cutting taxes is as powerful as it's been in 20 years, which happens to be the last time Washington passed a major tax cut. As Sen. Bob Torricelli, a Democrat from the high-tax state of New Jersey, puts it, "There should be no argument any more that Americans deserve a tax cut."

Start with the federal tax burden, which now totals 20.7 percent of the U.S. economy. The last time the feds grabbed that high a share of U.S. private income was 1944, when America was finishing up some business with Hitler and Tojo.

The Cold War ended in 1991. Yet the tax burden has increased over the past decade, something that has hap-

pened after no other war in U.S. history. According to the Tax Foundation, the average American family now works until May 3 each year before it stops paying Uncle Sam.

The explanation for this federal windfall is simple. The tax increases of 1990 and 1993 built a far more progressive tax structure. This has combined with a growing economy to vault more and more Americans into higher tax-rate brackets.

So a married couple that paid only 15 percent in the past has a run of good income years and suddenly pays the 28-percent rate. And millions of people who once paid a maximum marginal tax rate of 28 percent now pay 36 percent, or even what was advertised by former President Clinton as the "millionaire surtax" rate of 39.6 percent. Last year a couple had to make only \$288,350 to qualify for this "millionaire" rate.

This phenomenon erased the deficit to be sure, but so effectively that it is now producing a gusher of tax surpluses. Over the past four years federal budgeters have repeatedly raised their semi-annual surplus fore-

casts, often by hundreds of billions of dollars. When then-candidate George W. Bush designed his \$1.6 trillion tax cut plan in December 1999, the federal surplus was estimated to be only \$3.1 trillion over 10 years. Now the Congressional Budget Office says it will be \$5.6 trillion.

Ten-year estimates are always speculative. But despite this fiscal year's slow economy, federal revenues over the past five months have still come in 6.7 percent higher than a year ago, even faster than CBO predictions. What this tells us is that surpluses are a product of the tax-rate structure, not just recent prosperity. That structure was designed for an era of deficits and the Soviet threat.

With that era now over, the taxpayers who helped defeat both deserve a refund – all the more so because large surpluses are themselves becoming a problem. They are an invitation for politicians of both parties to find new ways to spend, as if



Four reasons not to slash Americans' taxes

By E. J. Dionne Jr.

PRESIDENT BUSH has proposed a tax cut. The Democrats have said they are for tax cuts. Is there any real difference between the two sides? Does this tax debate matter to you?

It does, and for reasons that politicians don't always want to talk about. Four big issues are at stake here — and they will be at stake no matter where the rapidly changing tax debate stands at the moment you read this.

The first issue is whether large tax cuts are the best idea at the moment. The second is who should get the most benefit out of the cuts. The third is what kind of tax cut would best get the economy moving again. The fourth is whether better uses of the budget surplus exist than cutting taxes.

The truth is that America achieved something important in the 1990s as a result of policies pursued both by the elder President Bush and by former President Clinton. Through a combination of budget cuts, tax increases on the wealthy and a booming economy in the 1990s, our nation eliminated a huge budget deficit.

Eliminating the deficit led to some good things. We began paying down our national debt. We had a

chance to do things we hadn't been able to do before — among them: providing a prescription drug benefit for our senior citizens and strengthening our education system. And partly because the deficit disappeared, interest rates that had been too high began to drop. All this helped feed the economic gains of the 1990s.

So one issue in looking at a tax cut is whether or not we want to be cautious about assuming that all the optimistic projections about big surpluses in the future will prove to be right. The President's tax cut is a plan that keeps cutting revenues into the year 2006. Isn't it more sensible to cut some taxes in the short term and put off the big cuts until we know



Samuel A. Mink



they didn't spend enough already.

Just look at the past three years. Even a supposedly tightwad Republican Congress has lifted spending by an average of 6 percent a year, more than double the rate of inflation. A last-minute, bipartisan splurge last year alone will increase federal spending by \$560 billion over 10 years, says the CBO. Surpluses left in Washington will become the excuse for politicians to create a permanently larger government.

Pay the Debt? But what about paying down the national debt? This is the most disingenuous argument now being made against a tax cut. For one thing, it is made by the same members of Congress who most want to spend the surplus. More important, the debt is already falling so fast that there soon won't be enough debt maturing each year to repay.

Here's the reason: Federal debt held by the public (Treasury bonds) comes due on a schedule (five years, 10 years and so on). According to both the White House and CBO, only about \$2 trillion of the \$3.2 trillion publicly held debt is going to come due over the next 10 years. The surplus from Social Security alone — which both parties have pledged not to touch — is more than enough to repay that \$2 trillion.

But to pay down the debt any faster would mean recalling bonds early, inevitably also paying a premium. So let's say Grandma bought Joey a \$100 U.S. savings bond paying 5 percent a year to teach him the value of thrift and patriotism. But that bond may not be due until 2020. Do we really want to bribe Joey to turn in the bond early by paying him a bonus? Early repayment is even sillier when you understand that 37 percent of U.S. treasuries are held by foreigners. It means keeping U.S. taxes higher than they need to be in order to pay a bonus to Japanese banks.

Well, then, why not pile up the surpluses in a fund to pay Social Security when the baby boomers retire? This sounds nice, but any such fund would be a huge political temptation. The excess cash can't be stuffed in a mattress. The temptation would be great for the feds to use the cash to invest in private stocks and bonds, with all the opportunity for political mischief that implies. Do we really want Congress becoming a major shareholder in IBM or Alcoa?

Another common argument against President Bush's tax cut is that it is skewed to "the rich." In one sense, this is undeniable, if beside the point. The more income you make the more taxes you pay, so of course the rich will get more money back from an income-tax cut. It is, after all, their money.

But the Bush plan nonetheless goes out of its way to compensate. Its proposal to double the \$500-per-child tax credit phases out at \$200,000 per couple, meaning the wealthy don't receive it. And under the Bush plan,



"The problem with the President's proposal is that so much of its benefit goes to the wealthiest taxpayers."

— E. J. Dionne Jr.

whether the budget will be balanced?

There is good reason to provide some tax cuts to the middle class, especially for those who did not realize the big economic gains of the 1990s. The problem with the President's proposal is that so much of its benefit goes to the wealthiest taxpayers. To say this is not to engage in class warfare. It is simply to ask where and to whom our budget surplus might usefully go.

The best estimates of the President's plan show the top 5 percent of taxpayers getting about half of the tax cuts. The top 1 percent get more than a third — some estimates put the number at more than 40 percent.

OK, but don't the wealthy pay the most taxes? Well, yes. But the wealthy get a larger share of the benefits from this tax cut than they'd receive if it were pegged to their total share of taxes paid. Why? Because Bush's plan targets its cuts to the income tax and the inheritance tax. It leaves out the Social Security tax, also known as FICA, which is the biggest tax on most Americans. And the inheritance tax cuts go entirely to the top 2 percent of estates — the only estates that now pay any tax at all. The estate tax could be cut and more families might be excluded from its reach. But a total repeal gives most of the benefits to the truly wealthiest among us.

And it is the wealthy who made the greatest gains in the past decade. According to Internal Revenue Service data analyzed by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the top 1 percent of tax filers saw their after-tax incomes increase by 24.1 percent between 1989 and 1997, the last year for which numbers are available. On average, their incomes went up from \$417,000 a year to \$518,000.

They may not like paying the tax increases signed into law first by the current President's father in the 1990 budget deal and then by Bill Clinton in 1993. But they sure like the economy that followed. And our current President's plan doesn't touch the tax that takes the most money out of the paychecks of most Americans: the Social Security tax.

There is a case for a tax cut that would help an economy that is showing signs of sluggishness. But far better ways exist to stimulate the economy now than passing a tax cut whose effect would be felt mostly in this President's second term, were he re-elected — and that goes, in any event, to the wealthiest taxpayers who have the least need to spend the money.

Conservatives who want a bigger tax cut make a fair point in criticizing Bush's tax cut proposal: Very few of its benefits would be paid out this year, when the economy could use a push. But this is not a case for a larger tax cut. It's a case for a smaller, quicker tax cut directed to the people who most need



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Under the latest U.S. Treasury estimates, taxpayers earning less than \$40,000 a year would get a 28-percent cut in their taxes. But those earning more than \$200,000 would get only an 8.7 percent cut under the Bush plan. Thus the share of total U.S. income taxes paid by the \$200,000-and-above crowd would increase after the Bush plan passed – to 45 percent of the total from 42.9 percent.

But the best argument for cutting the top income-tax rates is that tax cuts will spur a flagging economy. The top marginal rate of 39.6 percent – which quickly approaches 50 percent when you add state and Medicare taxes and the phase-out of deductions and exemptions – is paid by our most entrepreneurial citizens, especially small businessfolk. They are most likely to respond to lower rates by investing to expand or start a business.

The U.S. economy could use this incentive kick right about now. The best argument against Bush's proposal is that it's too small and that it phases in too slowly. The President designed his plan when surpluses were smaller and growth was faster. So he back-loaded it as a political precaution so he couldn't be accused of touching Social Security. The first round of cuts, recently passed by the U.S. House, included a mere \$5.6 billion tax cut for 2001. That's a nickel bet in Las Vegas. Congress should recognize the economic urgency and speed up the pace of the cuts.

The precedent to keep in mind is Ronald Reagan's tax cuts in the early 1980s. The U.S. economy was then in dreadful shape. Reagan's proposal – larger than Bush's as a proportion of the economy – ignited the largest boom since the 1960s.

Those tax cuts are often blamed for the deficits of the 1980s. But that ignores spending, which didn't fall as a share of the economy until defense spending declined after the Cold War ended. That critique also ignores the role of the Federal Reserve, which had to keep money tight in the early 1980s to break the back of raging inflation. In contrast, today the Fed is cutting interest rates. Given a minimum of spending control, a large tax cut today poses very little risk of a return to deficits.

The far greater risk is that Congress won't cut taxes. The economy would then grow more slowly than it can while the government grows faster than is wise. Every 20 years or so the case becomes overwhelming for a tax cut. John Kennedy passed one in the 1960s and a boom followed. Ronald Reagan did the same in the 1980s. It's time to emulate their successes. □



Paul A. Gigot, a writer for the Wall Street Journal, is a Pulitzer Prize winner for his 1999 columns on politics.



"The more income you make, the more taxes you pay, so of course the rich will get more money back."

– Paul A. Gigot



the money and would spend it to stimulate the economy.

If we want a tax cut that would stimulate the economy, wouldn't it make more sense to replace the income-tax reductions with a temporary cut in the Social Security tax? That would put a lot of money in the hands of the taxpayers who need it most at a moment when they could use it. Alternatively, the income-tax cut could be limited to the bottom rate. Or Congress

might consider an annual rebate to individual taxpayers, depending on how big the real surplus turned out to be.

The final issue is whether we really want so much of the surplus to go to tax cuts or whether it could be better used for other public purposes. Yes, the surplus is the money of the American people. But the American people have a right to decide whether their money best goes to a tax cut of this sort or whether it might do the country more good if it went to other areas.

It's significant that the President put off his defense-spending proposals for later. If he decides we need to spend more on defense, where will the money come from? Reforming Social Security for the next generation – whether you favor a privatized system or not – will cost real money. As Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., argued last year, we have to choose between whether to have a big tax cut or whether we want to put money aside to keep Social Security solvent.

We have other national needs. It remains a scandal that in our wealthy country, more than 40 million people – most of them people who work but don't qualify for government benefits – go without health insurance. Shouldn't giving them a chance to have health-care coverage be a priority? Shouldn't senior citizens get a drug benefit so they don't face a choice between needed medicine and food on their tables?

That's why this tax debate is not some arcane Washington fight. It's a battle over what our nation's priorities should be, how to make our economy grow and whom our government most needs to help. It's a great national argument in which all Americans should join. □



E.J. Dionne Jr. is a Washington Post columnist and a senior fellow in government studies at the Brookings Institution.

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Article design: Holly K. Soria

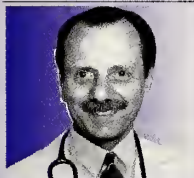
YOUR HEALTH NEWS

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OLD GLORY: SOUL OF OUR NATION

Spirit of Flag Day lives in flag-protection amendment.

By Matt Grills
Assistant Editor

In a one-room schoolhouse near Fredonia, Wis., a miniature American Flag standing in a bottle had a place of honor on teacher Bernard J. Cigrand's desk.

It might have been the sight of that flag – always before him – that convinced Cigrand a day should be set aside to observe the American Flag. It might have been the still-fresh wounds of the Civil War, which 20 years earlier left the nation badly divided and in need of something under which the states could unite once more.

Or it might have been that Cigrand's parents, who had emigrated from Luxembourg, taught their son that the American Flag symbolized opportunity and a freedom unlike any the world had ever seen.

Whatever it was that inspired him to lead his class in observing "Flag Birthday" on June 14, 1885 – the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of the Stars and Stripes – Cigrand managed to put something incredible in motion that day. He began a quest to give the American Flag a place of honor in the national ethos, a quest that ended for Cigrand when President Woodrow Wilson established Flag Day by proclamation May 16, 1930, and a quest that continues today in the form of the flag-protection amendment.

Cigrand recognized what many Americans, then and now,

simply haven't understood: their nation's flag has a symbolic power. Unity of country, sacrifice by those who live and die protecting it, celebration of personal and political liberty – these things, written in the stars and between stripes of red and white, make the American Flag precious and worth protecting by giving it a day of its own.

That was Cigrand's message, which he took to the nation's streets and publications long after he left teaching to become a dentist and, later, a college dean. It didn't take but a few years for his crusade to bear fruit: In 1889, a New York kindergarten teacher introduced Flag Day ceremonies at his school, prompting the State Board of Education of New York to adopt the idea of observing Flag Day. Next were the Public Schools of Philadelphia, which conducted Flag Day exercises June 14, 1893, in Independence Square. Hundreds of schoolchildren, each one carrying a small American Flag, assembled for a day of patriotic singing and uplifting addresses.

The following year, Cigrand and Leroy Van Horn organized the American Flag Day Association for the purpose of promoting a massive Flag Day celebration in Chicago. More than 300,000 schoolchildren gathered in Douglas, Garfield,

Humboldt, Lincoln and Washington parks to honor the flag.

President Woodrow

Wilson – whose own love for the Stars and Stripes ran deep, as evidenced by the moving language of his flag speeches – thought three decades of state and local celebrations warranted a proclamation. But in 1949, it was President Harry S. Truman who took the final step in inscribing Flag Day on the nation's collective conscience, when he signed an act of Congress making June 14 the one day every year when the American Flag would receive her due.

Cigrand's work lives on. The same spirit that put Flag Day on the national calendar drives the flag-protection amendment, recently reintroduced in the 107th Congress. Just as America is no ordinary nation, her

flag is no ordinary piece of cloth. When an object has been deemed precious – an event that for the American Flag came when that first Flag Day was celebrated in Cigrand's schoolhouse in 1885 – it must then be considered worth protecting. No better option exists to protect the Stars and Stripes than under America's Constitution, allowing respect for the flag to take its rightful place alongside the cherished rights to freedom of speech and religion.

Much like the flag-protection amendment, Flag Day was born in the hearts and minds of hard-working, proud-serving Americans. Their decision to willfully and passionately observe the flag every June 14 – a decision made year upon year for more than a century now – left elected officials no other choice than to endorse it. History indicates that must be the fate of the flag-protection amendment.

As President Wilson declared June 14, 1917, "This flag, which we honor and under which we serve, is the emblem of our unity, our power, our thought and purpose as a nation. It has no other character than that which we give it from generation to generation."

It is now another generation's turn. □

Article design: Holly K. Soria

Teacher Bernard J. Cigrand led his students in the first recorded Flag Day observance at Stoney Hill School in 1885.



Bernard J. Cigrand

Photo courtesy National Flag Day Foundation



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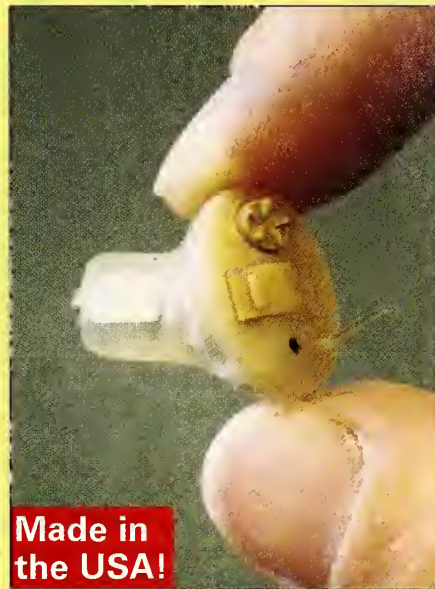
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LAW PROFESSORS SUPPORT CFA

Since the day the Citizens Flag Alliance hosted a Constitutional Scholars Conference in Williamsburg, Va., two law professors attending that conference, Richard D. Parker and Stephen B. Presser, have committed themselves to supporting The American Legion in its battle to protect Old Glory.

According to National Commander Ray G. Smith, these men have "guided The American Legion through the legal web, woven to ensnare us by opponents to this amendment. They have fought our battle in newspapers, in debate, on radio and in testimony before the judiciary committees of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives."

Parker is a professor of Law at Harvard Law School where he has taught since 1979.

Presser is a professor of legal history at Northwestern University where he teaches in the law school, the history department and the Kellogg Graduate School of Management.

Parker and Presser addressed the National Executive Committee at the Fall Meetings last October. The following are edited excerpts from their speeches:

ADDRESS: RICHARD D. PARKER

I want to thank you very much for this award. I don't know how many law professors have received awards from the Legion. My guess is a rather small number, which, believe me, makes me all the prouder to be here today and to receive this award. I think what I am most grateful to you all for is the opportunity I've had to participate in the campaign for the flag amendment. And I would like to give you three reasons. Have you ever noticed that the professors always have three reasons? Well, I have three reasons in this case.

First, of course, has been the opportunity this has given me to work with

and become friends with a range of individuals; from the people who answer the phones at headquarters to officers and members of the Legion I met around the country. Particularly, I remember one woman in Kentucky who told me about throwing ration cans at Germans in Italy. I've also appreciated working with General Brady.

Secondly, it has been an opportunity for me to work and to vindicate and perhaps even to redeem the foundation of the essence of our Constitution and the Rule of Law. There is an idea out there that the Constitution is opposed somehow to democracy, that the Constitution limits and is against democracy. That is just wrong. This campaign, it seems to me, has shown and reminded people of that. Democracy, first of all, means popular sovereignty. The basis of the Constitution and Constitutional Law is popular sovereignty, from "We the People" at the beginning of the text to Article V, setting forth the process of amendment that we have been invoking, toward the end of the text. Popular sovereignty is the essence of the Rule of Law; also of the essence is political equality. The Constitution doesn't belong to people who wear black robes. It certainly doesn't belong to professors. It belongs to all the American people, whoever they are. And the fact that the fancy people, some of the elite in the country, have opposed this amendment has countered for me as a strong reason to support it.

And finally, democracy is based in community. Without community, without some sense of commitment to the bonds that tie us to one another as well

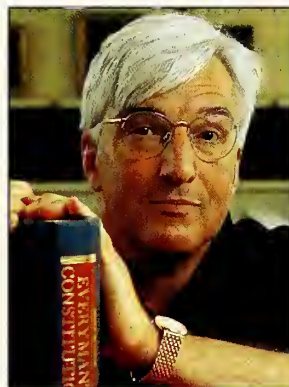
as the boundaries that protect us from one another, democracy is impossible. In this country, we call community "patriotism." That is essential to democracy. And that is what this campaign for this amendment has been all about.

That leads me to my third reason, which is much more personal. It is not something I have talked to anyone about, but I am going to say something about it today to you. I was classified 1-Y in 1969 as a result of arrests in the civil rights movement. Hence, I never served in the military. So what I have done here, in a way, has been for four other people, and I want to tell you who they are.

First, it is someone named Eugene Daley. I went to elementary school with him from kindergarten all the way through the senior year in high school. And I remember him very well. Eugene was not treated as he should have been by some of the teachers. But he was one of my classmates who was killed in Vietnam, and when I go to Washington I touch his name on the Memorial. So I have been doing this in part for him.

Let me say something about my own family. I come from a long line of family grocers. For four generations, my family has run, or did run, a grocery store in a little rural town in New Hampshire, the town of Fitzwilliam. Let me tell you about three of those people.

Second, my great-grandfather who, of course, I never knew. He fought in the Civil War, and as a kid I used to play with his Civil War pistol. As I started reading histories of the Civil War, I thought a lot of what he must have been through. He was at Gettysburg.



Harvard Law professor Richard D. Parker owes much of his support for the flag amendment to a tradition of patriotism established by his great-grandfather.

C. Fitzgerald/Memory Pictures

Third, my grandfather who had children right before World War I but didn't serve in the World War. As a little kid, I spent a month every year with him. Every morning I would go out with him to raise the flag. No matter what, this was a ritual we had done. So I have been thinking of him.

But most of all, my father. My father served in World War II. He went over to Europe after D-Day. He was involved in the crossing of the Rhine and then the occupation of Germany. For a long time, unfortunately, and maybe this is the case of many veterans of World War II, he never got around to telling me very much about his experiences in the war. But what he did communicate with me was patriotism. Let me tell you one story.

When he was dying 30 years ago, he told me that a year before, he had been on a business trip to Pennsylvania. He had taken time out at the end of the day to go to the Battlefield at Gettysburg. He had walked out into that huge, green area where Pickett's Charge took place and was turned back. It was twilight and he stood in the middle of that area and he looked to where there was an American flag. He was all alone and saluted the flag. That made a great impression on me and I think you could imagine that. Now, all of these people, particularly my relatives, would be proud of me being a law professor. But they would be more proud in my working for this flag amendment. And for me, this has been a way of returning this salute.

ADDRESS: STEPHEN B. PRESSER

That is a very hard act to follow and I am going to give almost essentially the same speech that Richard did. But we law professors believe that you never get it the first time around. Maybe it won't hurt to do it twice.

What I wanted to say this afternoon is that it is really Richard and I who should be thanking you. You have to remember that Richard and I travel in a strange and bizarre world. People we encounter are lawyers, law professors and law students. Working with the Citizens Flag Alliance, on the other hand, we had the rare privilege of meeting actual human beings. And it was a wonderful experience. I got to meet Miss America and Tommy LaSorda. I got to meet Pat Brady and lots of others working for the CFA. I saw life as it really is lived, and it was an eye-opening experience.

In all seriousness, what working for you has taught me is that our framers were right. There is an old saying that judges and law professors like to use, quoting Earl Warren, "You can't turn back the clock." A wise man named C. S. Lewis once said, "If the clock is giving you the wrong time, you not only can turn back the time, you should."

In 1989 the Supreme Court made a wrong turn in constitutional law, and we have merely been trying to set the clock back to 1989.

That was what this amendment was all about. It was about democracy. All about the people expressing their views. But for me, this was about something more. If I learned anything from my study of the constitutional beginnings – and you have to remember that I am supposed to be a legal historian, a current expert on constitutional law – what I learned from the framers is you couldn't have order without law. You couldn't have law without morality. You couldn't have morality without religion. This is what the CFA has always understood.

And if we haven't been about a religious crusade, surely we have been about a moral one. You all taught me something about morality and common sense – something missing from the Supreme Court and most of the current legal academy. The really good lawyers who lived in the 16th and 17th centuries used to talk about the law being written in our hearts, not concocted by obscure Supreme Court justices. When five out of nine justices can't tell the difference between speech protected by the First Amendment and immoral outrages and dangerous acts of desecration, it is a reminder that maybe it is time to return to basics, which is what our amendment effort tries to do.

You will remember that Bill Clinton won the 1992 election with the slogan "It's the economy, stupid." We thought of a great slogan for us to remind the court where it went wrong for our amendment: "It's not speech, stupid." So what I have learned from you is the value of the simple and the true – and

the simplicity and beauty of true values, like patriotism and honor and sacrifice.

I am not a veteran, though I am the son of one, and most of us in the academy are not veterans as Richard, I think, hinted.

In the '60s, many of us did not have the courage to put our country's needs in front of our own. You gave me a chance to work with people who did, and I think a tiny bit of it may have rubbed off.

Thomas Jefferson

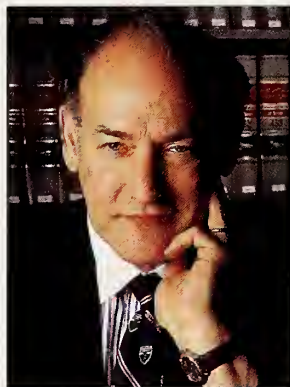
used to say that the only chance our Republic had to survive was if we managed to cultivate virtue in our citizens. Today's legal culture puts individual expression in its center and values, above all, self-actualization and what I label self-indulgence. It is just what leads the Supreme Court to think that flag desecration is just speech. Just one more way of saying, "Hey, what I have to say is just as good as anybody else, and if I trash your national symbol, it is my right as an American." It

is not, it never has been, never will be, but there are some things that need to remain sacred in any society, and ours is our unique national symbol. It used to be said, especially during the Civil War, that the only cause worth fighting for was a lost cause, and there is some wisdom in that. That is the way I have felt working with you.

But the fact remains that we did some things that no legal struggle in America has ever done. Never before in American history have 49 state legislatures asked the Congress to send an amendment to them for ratification. Our amendment came very close indeed to passing – only four errant and foolish United States Senators stood in its way. And as it has been suggested, with any luck a more sensible Senate will be elected.

This is a good occasion to renew our determination and to remind ourselves that our cause is just and in the true spirit of the American Constitution. To paraphrase Daniel Webster, "It is a small amendment, but there are those who love it." Next year may it succeed. □

Article design: Doug Rollison



Stephen B. Presser, a professor of legal history at Northwestern University, distinguishes between freedom of speech and the outrage of flag desecration.

'CUTTING BACKLOG' PRINCIPI'S TOP PRIORITY

***Vietnam War Veteran
takes helm at VA.***

By John Raughter
Editor

On Jan. 14, 1999, the Commission on Service members and Veterans Transition

Assistance called for some bold steps to improve the quality of life for America's warriors. Full college scholarships, expanded health care and better pay for America's military were just some of its recommendations.

The Commission was the first major inquiry into veterans programs since the Eisenhower administration. Then-National Commander Butch Miller said the Commission "will be remembered for strengthening benefits available to the men and women who serve this nation in uniform. The panel deserves our thanks for a job well done."

No longer an outsider looking in, the chairman of that Commission, Anthony J. Principi, is now in a position to do something about it. The Naval Academy graduate who commanded a river patrol unit during the Vietnam War is now the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.



ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI: It's hard to say. I'm certainly an advocate for the recommendations of the Commission, particularly those that relate to education. Education is clearly the key to success for young men and women separating from military service. I will do everything within my power to advocate the establishment of a program that allows men and women to pursue their educational goals limited only by their ability and aspirations. Of course, I recognize that as Secretary I have to oversee programs and funding for a wide array of services and benefits for veterans. Although I have to look at the cost of the educational program and how it impacts on other benefits, I intend to remain a strong advocate.

Q: What is your top priority as VA Secretary?

A: My highest priority without question is to reduce the enormous backlog of claims. It is an absolute national tragedy, indeed a national disgrace, that almost 500,000 claims are now pending before the Veterans Benefits Administration for disability compensation and pension. If we do nothing, that will grow to about 600,000 claims, which will take

VA Secretary Anthony J. Principi has inherited a department with nearly 500,000 medical claims pending.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE: The Principi Commission recommended restoring the GI Bill back to its original value. Do you see this happening anytime soon?

almost a year to resolve. World War II veterans are dying at the rate of 1,500 a day. We need to take decisive steps to reduce this backlog. It is unacceptable and cannot stand.

I am calling for a broad-based commission to take a look at all our management systems, our technology, our processes and our organizational structure to see what needs to be done to reduce the backlog. I want practical hands-on solutions to bring this backlog down and give veterans the opportunity to have their claims evaluated in a timely manner and in a quality manner. I refuse to accept the fact that because we want good quality, we have to have timeliness that's off the charts. The Commission will be made up of people from the private sector, representatives from Veterans Service Organizations and forward-thinking VA officials. I would like to have those solutions on my desk 90 days from the date the commission kicks off, so I can look at those recommendations and get them implemented.

Q: Under the prior administration, VA refused to assist veterans in establishing "well-grounded" disability claims. Now, due in part to pressure by The American Legion, "Duty-to-Assist" is now the law. How has your department responded to the mandate that VA must once again assist veterans with these claims?

A: It's unfortunate that the "Duty-to-Assist" issue came about. It should never have been stopped in the first place. It's a very important component of our responsibilities to provide disability compensation and other benefits. The change is in the process of being implemented. It will require us to go back and review approximately 343,000 claims, so it will add significantly to our work-



Principi, left, meets with PNC Jake Comer at The American Legion's 2001 Washington Conference. Principi is a member of Post 17 in Kodiak, Alaska.

load. But it is a good change and certainly one I support.

Q: Desert Storm ended 10 years ago, yet there is still mystery surrounding Gulf War illness. Are we close to determining the cause of it?

A: That's a very difficult question. I believe the federal government, particularly the Department of Defense and VA, have worked very diligently to find answers. The last I heard, we spent in excess of \$150 million in research and are still studying it. Clearly environmental hazards on the battlefield can be as deadly as shrapnel, bayonet cuts or bullet wounds. If you were exposed to ionizing radiation as a young soldier or scrubbing a ship down in the Bikini

Atoll, we need to pay attention to that. Causes of disabilities could range from our soldiers walking the streets of Nagasaki and Hiroshima after the blast to those riding the rivers of Vietnam after Agent Orange was sprayed. I remember when I was Deputy Secretary of VA and watched the black fires of the Persian Gulf on CNN, I said to myself, 'I see the makings of another Agent Orange situation.' It was at that time that I ordered a registry be conducted so we would be able to

track the long-term health effects of the men and women who have been exposed to environmental hazards in the Persian Gulf. Sometimes symptoms don't show up until 20 or 30 years after an event and suddenly people start coming down with certain forms of cancer. Only with a registry can you track people and make intelligent decisions on what happened to people in battle. That's why I insisted on a registry and, of course, VA dragged its feet because it was a different idea. But I'm going to be very insistent that we carry on these policies because long after I'm gone someone will be in my place who will have to determine what is associated with environmental exposures. That said, I think we should always give veterans the reasonable benefit of the doubt. Scientists are never clear in these cases. You have one scientist saying 'yes' and another scientist saying 'no.' That's always the case in the scientific

"It is an absolute national tragedy, indeed a national disgrace, that almost 500,000 claims are now pending before the Veterans Benefits Administration for disability compensation and pension."

medical field. It's very difficult to reach a consensus. But again, the people who are putting their lives at risk deserve the highest merit. During my tenure, during this President's administration, they will receive it.

Q: What role do you see The American Legion and other VSOs playing with VA?

A: To be successful, the VSOs have to be part of the process. They have to be partners with VA in getting the job done. I appreciate and recognize that the buck stops with me and that I have to make decisions. I will make decisions and I will see them implemented and I will hold people accountable. But before getting there, I want input and advice. I want a partnership with the VSOs, so we can reach a consensus on how to get things done. I think that was one of the hallmarks of the Commission that I was fortunate enough to chair – the Commission on Service members and Veterans Transition Assistance. The fact is that 12 members – some Republicans, some Democrats, some generals, some privates and the representatives of VSOs – all came together with different and fervently held views. They were willing to subordinate their personal views for the consensus because they knew that a Commission report that was unanimous would be better received and have a greater impact on Congress. I intend to do the same as VA Secretary. I may not always agree with the VSOs on every issue, but they will be part of that decision-making process.

Q: There are veterans on Medicare who would like to use VA facilities but cannot do so. Do you support Medicare subvention?

A: Yes I do. Several pilot projects on Medicare subvention have been



Principi outlines his vision for VA during the legislative rally at the Legion's Washington Conference.

working in various areas. We are providing care for some veterans over the age of 65 who would normally fall under Medicare. To the extent that we provide care, I think that we should be reimbursed. Of course, HHS (Department of Health and Human Services) feels differently. They are not currently budgeted for that amount of money and would prefer to see the status quo. I think it goes to a bigger issue, an issue of how we are coordinated with other federal agencies. Between DOD, HHS and Medicare there's a lot of overlapping eligibilities and I'm not sure beneficiaries are well served by this. We need to sit down with Defense Secretary (Donald) Rumsfeld and HHS Secretary (Tommy)

"I refuse to accept the fact that because we want good quality, we have to have timeliness that's off the charts."

Thompson and try to make some sense of this. I think VA plays a very important role and it's a proven fact that we deliver health care more efficiently than others do.

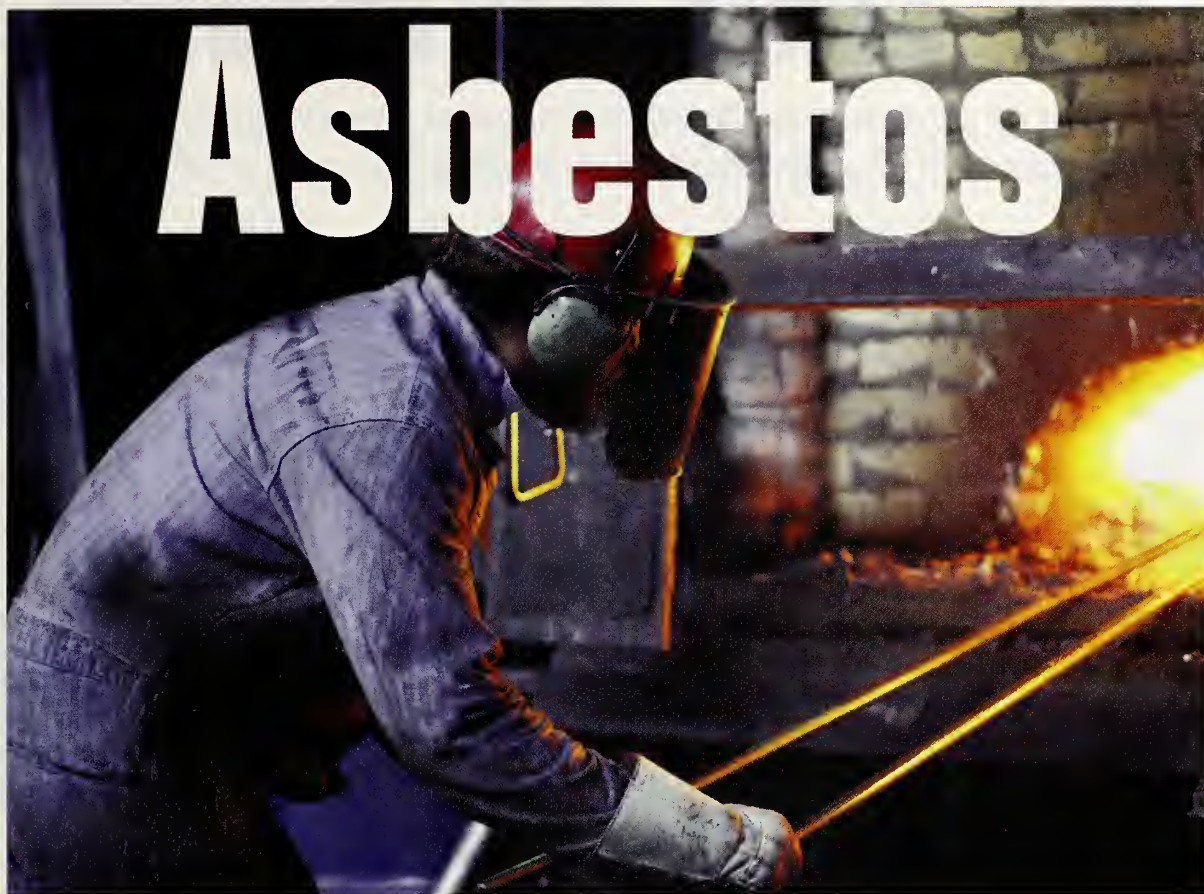
Q: The President's proposed VA health-care budget falls short of The American Legion's proposal. Do you believe that the administration's budget is sufficient to meet the growing needs of veterans?

A: I certainly support the President's budget. We worked very hard in fighting for an adequate budget with OMB (Office of Management and Budget). The starting point was not good. I believe the President's intercession in getting us the \$1 billion increase was important and greatly appreciated. This \$1 billion increase is 63 percent higher than the average percentage increases in total discretionary spending for VA over the past eight years. Its health care increases alone are 14 percent higher than the average increases over the past two administrations. Can I work with this budget? You bet I can. Do I want more? You bet, but wouldn't all cabinet secretaries like more money? The President has established a policy to control federal spending across the board. It's growing out of control. We want to ensure there is money to educate our children, to protect Social Security and to give some money back to the American people. I applaud The American Legion for fighting for VA and for fighting for our nation's veterans. After all the debates are finished, when the ink is dry on the bottom line, I will work aggressively to ensure the dollars I receive, whether it's a \$1 billion increase or a \$2.4 billion increase, are spent wisely and efficiently for veterans. □

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THE TIME IS NOW

Invigorated by prospects in the 107th Congress, Legionnaires fan out across Capitol Hill to support veterans' causes and protect Old Glory.

By James V. Carroll
Assistant Editor

Still disappointed after last year's four-vote defeat of the flag-protection amendment in the Senate, Legionnaires assembled for their 41st Annual Washington Conference more determined than ever to taste victory in 2001.

Last-minute flip-flops by Sens. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., and Richard Bryan, D-Nev., aborted any chance of victory for flag-amendment advocates in the 106th Congress. Despite a 305-124 vote in the House in 1999, the 63-37 vote in the Senate spelled doom for flag protection.

Despite the setback of last year, Legionnaires and the 142 patriotic organizations of the Citizens Flag Alliance say they feel 2001 holds the greatest opportunity in their 12-year effort to get a flag-protection amendment passed by Congress and sent to the states.

"We've always held a strong edge in the House, and of all the new members in the new House, there are only three who do not agree with us on the flag issue," CFA Board Chairman Patrick H. Brady told Legionnaires attending the Washington Conference March 10-14. "On the Senate side, eight of 12 new members are with us. Overall, 85 percent of those committed in the 107th Congress support us on the flag."

More importantly, flag-protection advocates have the support of President George W. Bush politically and emotionally, said Brady, a retired Army major general and recipient of the Medal of Honor for a series of medical rescue missions during the Vietnam War.

"The flag was taken away by the Supreme Court during his father's presidency and I'm sure President (George W.) Bush would like to see it returned," Brady said. "Not only as a present to his father, but because returning the flag to the American peo-



Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, introduces the flag-protection constitutional amendment. He is flanked by Medal of Honor recipient and CFA Board Chairman Patrick H. Brady, and fellow primary sponsors Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, R-Calif., and Sen. Max Cleland, D-Ga.

ple is the right thing to do."

The Supreme Court made a mistake, and the American people have an obligation and sacred duty to correct that mistake, Brady said. The Bill of Rights was designed to protect the people, but government — through the courts — has been using the Bill of Rights to defile the values of the people.

"We must make it known that flag-burners are not the problem. The problem is those who call flag burning 'speech,'" Brady said. "Every American should be outraged by legalized flag-burning — not just because it is wrong, but because calling it speech defiles our hallowed Constitution. Our opponents have usurped the Constitu-

tion as their defense when the fight to recapture our flag is, in truth, a fight to recapture our Constitution. We will not win this struggle until there are enough members of Congress who have the courage to stand up to the media and correct the errors of the Court."

That time may be at hand.

"Sen. Max Cleland, Rep. Randy 'Duke' Cunningham, Rep. John Murtha and I will today introduce the flag-protection constitutional amendment," Senate Judiciary Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, announced in a standing-room-only Dirksen Senate Office Building hearing room. "Our amendment reads simply: 'The Congress shall have power to prohibit the

"If the American Flag is not sacred, what in the world is? Parents have lost their children for this flag; wives have lost their husbands. Congress should protect it."

— Sen. Max Cleland, D-Ga.

physical desecration of the flag of the United States.' This amendment will return to the American people the right to protect the American Flag from desecration and disgrace."

It's time for Americans to make unequivocally clear that certain behavior in this country is and should be recognized as wrong and punishable by law, Hatch said. Laws are based on our values, not vice versa. By passing the flag-protection amendment, Congress will reaffirm the very basis of the Constitution, he added.

"We must recapture and reinvigorate the importance of our responsibilities as citizens, to each other and to our communities," Hatch said. "Doing so will help us to combat divisiveness, selfishness and immorality. The flag-protection constitutional amendment is a step toward reorienting our moral compass."

Cleland agreed.

"As a veteran who risked his life in Vietnam to protect the freedoms that Americans hold sacred, I am a strong supporter of the First Amendment," Cleland said. "However, I believe that an amendment to protect the flag is an acceptable, very specific limitation in order to protect the most sacred of



Sgt. Maj. of the Marine Corps Alford McMichael serves as a panelist during a discussion on the Legion's Reconnect Program.

American symbols. I believe that societal interest in preserving the symbolic value of the flag outweighs the interest of an individual who chooses to physically desecrate the flag.

"The flag unites Americans as no symbol can. If the American Flag is not sacred, what in the world is? Parents have lost their children for this flag; wives have lost their husbands. Congress should protect it," Cleland added.

Hatch and Cleland said they believe enough votes exist in the Senate to get the necessary 67 to pass the flag-protection amendment during the 107th Congress. Cunningham and Murtha are convinced the House will once again vote to send the flag-protection amendment to the states for ratification.

"We have momentum," Hatch said.

"The flag is a solemn and sacred symbol of the many sacrifices made by our founding fathers and our veterans throughout several wars as they fought to establish and protect the founding principles of our nation,"

Cunningham added. "It is imperative that we finally enact protections for our flag. Amending our constitution to protect the flag is a necessity."

Following the March 13 press conference, Legionnaires fanned out

Legion remembers Desert Storm Vets

A standing-room-only crowd of more than 300 attended The American Legion's "Reunion and Unity" tribute to nearly 700,000 U.S. veterans of the Persian Gulf War who helped free Kuwait from the grip of Iraqi occupation.

The forum, organized by the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission's Gulf War Task Force, kicked off The American Legion's 41st Washington Conference March 10. The commemoration was a retrospective on perseverance in battle, the intractability of freedom and lessons America learned both about its troops and the institutions that produced them.

U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., who served as legal counsel for an Army medical service corps division in the Persian Gulf, was one of four members of Congress who received a Certificate of Appreciation from The American Legion acknowledging his active-duty service during the 1991 war. Reps. Jim Gibbons, R-Nev., Mark Kirk, R-Ill., and Van Hilleary, R-Tenn., also were honored.

Buyer, visibly moved in his remarks as he remembered a fallen comrade, characterized the allied victory as yet another chapter in the annals of the American GI.

"They fight for no bounty of their own and leave freedom in their footsteps," Buyer said. "The only thing that I left in that part of the world is my innocence."

Retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Charles Horner, who was in charge of air operations during the war, reflected on the conditions through which U.S. troops triumphed. Although beset with spoiled food, tent life, mind-bending heat and vision obscured by the occasional torrents of muddy rain, "The ground war was truly magnificent," Horner said, pointing out that the Guard and Reserve units were well prepared.

"Desert Storm is a miracle for

one thing: the men and women who were there," Horner said. "I'd always find this can-do spirit."

Horner concluded that the victory endorsed many forms of change: a change in technology, a change in America's view of its armed forces, a change in tactical focus from maximizing killing to minimizing U.S. casualties while killing, and a change in the international perspective on America's post-Vietnam War fighting spirit.

"We changed warfare; we saw things we never saw work before work well," Horner said, alluding to smart munitions and stealth technology. "[The victory] didn't just change warfare. It changed nations. It helped us escape the Vietnam syndrome."

"Our schools work, our families work, our churches work because they put forth a half-million of the finest young men and women."

Acting Kuwait Ambassador Ahmed Razouki summarized the global implications of the war in one poignant query: "Had Baghdad's aggression not been reversed, what message would that have sent to other dictators?"

Since the end of the war, The American Legion has been at the forefront of advocacy on behalf of Gulf War veterans suffering from a variety of illnesses, some diagnosed and some mysterious. The commemoration included a discussion of the government's efforts to deal with sick veterans, efforts inspired in large measure by The American Legion. Addressing veterans' health issues were Department of Veterans Affairs Deputy Under Secretary for Health Dr. Frances Murphy; Dr. Michael Kilpatrick, chief of staff for the Department of Defense Gulf War Office; and Army Lt. Col. Dr. Chuck Engel, chief of the Gulf War Health Center at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

— Steve Thomas

across Capitol Hill to convince their Senators and Representatives "the time is now" to pass the flag-protection amendment. They also took the yearly opportunity to reinforce time-honored Legion causes in support of the nation's veterans.

Flag protection took center stage at the Conference, but a number of other important veterans issues also were discussed. Conference speakers highlighted issues such as concurrent receipt, Gulf War illnesses, Montgomery GI Bill education benefits, Medicare subvention, military absentee voting issues and fiscal 2002 Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs budget requests.

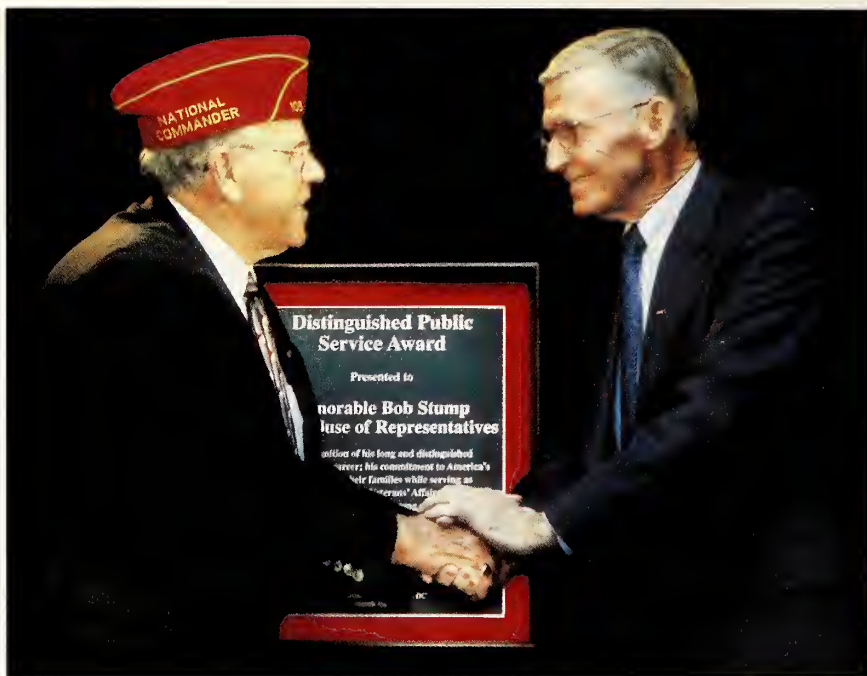
VA Activist. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony J. Principi told Legionnaires he is a committed activist for veterans' rights and benefits. He vowed to conduct a top-to-bottom review of VA health care and claims processing services.

"If we don't improve our benefits and services after four years, I will consider my tour as a failure," Principi told Legionnaires.

Myriad VA activities will be scrutinized – and improved if need be – to ensure that the needs of active-duty



Aaron Helm, left, Sergeant-at-Arms of the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Nebraska, shares a moment with retired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Patrick Brady, Citizens Flag Alliance Board Chairman, after flag-protection amendments were introduced in both the House and Senate.



National Commander Ray G. Smith, left, presents Rep. Bob Stump, R-Ariz., with the Legion's Distinguished Public Service Award. Stump, a member of Post 2, Tempe, Ariz., is the former House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman.

soldiers are being met when they become veterans and file for benefits, Principi said. New technology methods are likely to play a major role in upgrading VA services, he added.

"It is unacceptable to take two years to make decisions on medical claims," Principi said. "I want practical hands-on solutions to find ways to provide timely evaluations on claims. I want to ensure we have uniform access to high-quality health care in a timely manner."

It is his personal commitment to restore the confidence of many veterans who have lost faith in VA's ability to fairly and promptly decide their benefit claims, Principi said.

In other Washington Conference events, Rep. Bob Stump, R-Ariz., former House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman and current House Armed Services Committee Chairman, was presented the Legion Distinguished Public Service Award by American Legion National Commander Ray G. Smith.

Stump was recognized for his long-distinguished career in public service; his commitment to America's veterans and their families while serving as chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee; his consistent support for a strong national defense second to none; and his steadfast backing for a constitutional amendment to protect the American Flag from desecration, Smith said.

"To be recognized is one thing, but to be recognized by your peers is always very special," said Stump, a Legionnaire for 56 years and member of Post 2 in Tempe, Ariz. "It has been an honor and privilege to serve as Chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee. I think we have done a lot of good things for a lot of veterans. I say 'we' because I can't presume to take credit for this. It took the entire Veterans Affairs Committee and it took Congress. But more than that, it took your participation and your tremendous efforts by calling on your members of Congress to make them aware how you feel about veterans issues. It means a lot."

Also honored was Wal-Mart for its support of the National World War II Memorial and for its associates' voter-registration drive.

Smith presented Wal-Mart the National Commander's 2001 Public Relations Award during the closing of the Washington Conference. Wal-Mart Vice President Norm Lezy, a retired Air Force lieutenant general, accepted the award at a luncheon in honor of the retailer.

"Wal-Mart's public service upholds traditional values and two of the American Legion's founding principles: Americanism and preserving the memory of those who fought in our nation's wars," Smith said. □

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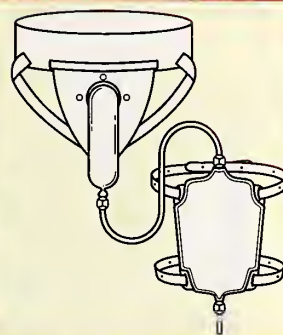
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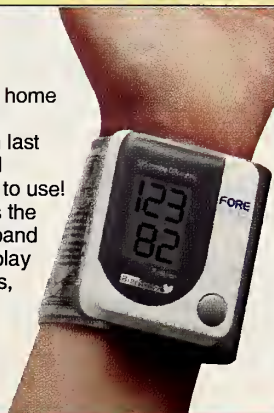
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Auxiliary seeks Legion's assistance

By Kristine West

THE YEAR WAS 1970. The Vietnam War was escalating, four students were gunned down at Kent State University, the Apollo 13 crew escaped a near tragedy and 18-year-olds gained the right to vote in federal elections.

Americans were going to the box office to see George C. Scott in "Patton." We were listening to Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water" on the radio and watching "Marcus Welby, M.D." on television.

Our American Legion Auxiliary was celebrating its 50th anniversary by serving our beloved veterans through 1,236,799 hours of service and \$1,646,328 in expenditures. America's children and youth were aided by the Auxiliary's support of pre-school vision testing, educational services for the multiply handicapped and rubella immunization screening. Community service efforts amounted to \$480,877 and 1,400,324 volunteer hours.

It was a time of growth for The American Legion Auxiliary as it wel-

"The American Legion Auxiliary's national membership is at its lowest point since 1970, a 30-year low. We must stop this membership slide now."

comed into eligibility granddaughters of veterans. More than 15,000 granddaughters joined that year. In the next five years, the organization would gain an additional 40,000 members, due largely to female relatives of new Vietnam War veterans. With more than 12,000 units, The American Legion Auxiliary ended 1970 with 922,170 members.

Fast forward 30 years – things have changed a lot. Along with differences in our pop culture, technology and everyday living, the needs of The American Legion Auxiliary have changed. In fact, the Auxiliary's needs are greater and

AUXILIARY REPORT



American Legion Auxiliary National President Kristine West

more profound than ever.

Today, the Auxiliary serves more than 1.5 million veterans through \$5.7 million in donations and 4 million hours of service. Our assistance to America's youth tallies \$5.35 million with 1 million volunteer hours serving 1,250,000 children. We give back to our communities in the amount of 2.8 million hours and \$4 million.

The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 25 million veterans are out there. More youths are at high risk; an aging veterans population has dire medical and social needs in the hospital, field and home settings; and more demands than ever have been placed on our communities and families.

However, The American Legion Auxiliary's national membership is at its lowest point since 1970, a 30-year low. We must stop this membership slide now.

We simply cannot keep up with the needs of those we were founded to assist with fewer and fewer members. Auxiliary members are aggressively working to stop this slide. Now we take our campaign to the organization that has never turned its back on us – The American Legion.

We encourage Legionnaires' wives, mothers, sisters, daughters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters and grandmothers to join our ranks. If you are hesitant, let us know why. If you are a female veteran, your military service

earns you membership to our organization as well. If you are a veteran's female relative and haven't joined, why not? We need to know what we can do to make The American Legion Auxiliary more desirable and beneficial for all those eligible.

Our service to veterans, communities, and children and youth is far-reaching. We offer something for everyone. Our programs include assistance to some of the most respected organizations in existence: Girl Scouts of America, Children's Miracle Network, Special Olympics, March of Dimes, American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, America's Promise, Citizens Flag Alliance, Ronald McDonald Homes and Fisher House, to name only a few.

Furthermore, we support the Legion's High School Oratorical Contest, the Junior Shooting Sports, American Legion Baseball and the Child Welfare Foundation. We provide scholarships, distribute poppies, promote flag education, sponsor Girls State and Girls Nation and raise funds for the National World War II Memorial. This year, we proudly became a sponsor of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

National Commander Ray G. Smith and I agree that when a veteran's entire family is involved in Legion functions, it strengthens not only his or her family, but our Legion Family as well. I am asking all Posts and Units to join as a family to seek out women eligible for membership in your communities, to encourage our junior members to continue past their 18th birthdays and to do a better job of retaining our current membership.

In The American Legion Auxiliary's 81-year history, our members have faithfully cared for and assisted America's veterans. We have served our communities and have been mentors to children, our greatest natural resource. Please help us continue this excellent tradition by supporting our membership. By doing so, you help us, help yourself and help The American Legion, the greatest, strongest and most-loved wartime veterans organization in America. □

Kristine S. West is the National President of The American Legion Auxiliary.

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TAKING AWAY THE ACHE

Two natural remedies may help alleviate arthritis pain.

By Tara Parker-Pope

When patients hobble into the Arthritis Center at Boston University Hospital, they often ask Dr. Tim McAlindon about two popular natural remedies: glucosamine and chondroitin.

Although he was once skeptical of them, McAlindon's own research and other medical studies have since convinced him the supplements may help. "I now tell patients that they're worth trying," says McAlindon, associate professor at Boston University's School of Medicine.

Last year, consumers spent about \$400 million on glucosamine and chondroitin supplements, according to ACNielsen. The supplements generally are made from crushed crab shells or cow windpipes. How they work is unproven, but one theory is that they help rebuild worn cartilage between joints. Some doctors believe the supplements have an anti-inflammatory effect.

Osteoarthritis affects nearly everyone as he or she ages. It occurs as the cartilage that acts as cushioning between joints breaks down and wears away. The result can be stiffness, aches, limited movement and severe pain.

Although the disease is common, arthritis sufferers have few options because daily use of many drugs can lead to additional health problems.

Long-term use of common pain relievers such as ibuprofen can cause ulcers and internal bleeding. Nearly 17,000 arthritis patients die each year as a result of taking too much of this type of drug. Acetaminophen can relieve pain, but taking more than recommended can lead to severe liver problems. Some new prescription drugs have fewer side effects but can cost \$60 to \$100 a month.

Two high-profile studies have boosted interest in glucosamine and chondroitin supplements. The first, written by McAlindon and published last year in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, reviewed 15 studies of

glucosamine and chondroitin. The article concluded that although much of the research is flawed, the supplements probably do help relieve pain.

In January, the medical journal *Lancet* published a three-year Belgian study, funded by the Italian supplement maker Rotta, that followed 212 patients with arthritic knees. Half the patients took glucosamine sulfate and half took a placebo. The patients taking glucosamine reported as much as 25-percent improvement in pain. More significantly, X-rays showed patients taking the placebo continued to lose cartilage between their joints. The knees of patients taking glucosamine were essentially unchanged, suggesting the supplements may have slowed the progression of the disease.

It's unclear whether taking glucosamine or chondroitin alone or together offers the most relief. Most of the research favors glucosamine, but many patients swear by a combination of the products. Manufacturers often recommend a combination of 500 mg of glucosamine and 400 mg of chondroitin three times a day. The *Lancet* study used 1,500 mg of glucosamine sulfate once a day.

But even though research suggests the supplements may help, confusion remains about which brands to take. Some brands contain glucosamine hydrochloride and others contain glucosamine sulfate. Researchers don't know whether the type of glucosamine makes a difference. "It's very confusing," McAlindon says.

Of greater concern is that many brands don't contain the promised ingredients. A review by the independent testing firm ConsumerLab.com found that among 25 major brands of glucosamine and chondroitin supplements, nearly a third didn't contain everything promised on the label. A listing of the brands that passed the review is available for a \$15.95 annual subscription at www.consumerlab.com.

Some doctors recommend patients use Dona, the Rotta brand studied in the



Medical research indicates natural remedies glucosamine and chondroitin relieve arthritis pain.

Lancet article. The product can be found at www.originalglucosamine.com.

The supplements aren't cheap. Rex-all Sundown's popular brand Osteo Bi-Flex contains both glucosamine and chondroitin. It costs about \$30 for a 110-pill bottle. A three-week supply of Dona is about \$30.

Although the supplements are widely viewed as safe, consumers, especially those on medication, should always ask their doctors first. A few brands contain high levels of manganese, which in large amounts can cause neurological side effects. People with shellfish allergies or diabetes, or those who are on blood-thinning drugs may also be advised not to take glucosamine. □

Living Well is a column written to provide general information to our readers. It is not intended to be nor is it medical advice. Readers should consult their personal physicians when they have health problems.

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Don't let aging joints ruin your life

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① First National Bank Omaha

Legion family, FNBO join forces

The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion have paired up with First National Bank Omaha to offer a variety of banking services that benefit the Legion's many programs. Members of the Legion and SAL are encouraged to take advantage of FNBO's many programs.

All revenues earned by The American Legion through its partnership with First National Bank Omaha will go directly into the Legion's general fund, which supports Americanism programs such as Boys Nation, Legion Baseball and the National Oratorical Contest, as well as the Legion's VA&R programs.

All proceeds from this partnership go directly into the general fund that supports those programs."

First National Bank Omaha offers Legionnaires many services, including The American Legion Visa Card, certificates of deposit, IRAs, money market savings accounts and home-equity products.

This spring FNBO will donate \$5 to the National Emergency Fund whenever a Legion family member opens an FNBO Visa account and uses the card for the first time. In the future, FNBO may offer potential services that will also benefit Legion programs.

Legionnaires are encouraged to transfer their CDs to FNBO once the CDs reach their maturation date.

To learn more about banking services that FNBO offers members of The American Legion family, use the following toll-free numbers: for Visa accounts, (866) LGN-VISA; for CDs, IRAs and money market accounts, (877) 709-FNBO; and for home-equity products, (877) 709-FNBO.

Legionnaires may also apply online at www.legion.org.



Finalists in the 2001 National Oratorical Contest were from left: Alexander Captain, Miraga, Calif.; Caleb Williams, Lewisville, Texas; and Tiffany Francisco, Chesapeake, Va.

Texas student top Orator

The top three contestants in the 64th American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest were Caleb Williams, Lewisville, Texas; Alexander Captain, Moraga, Calif.; and Tiffany Francisco, Chesapeake, Va.

A Lewisville (Texas) High School senior capped a busy weekend of competition in Indianapolis April 8 by earning an \$18,000 college scholarship with a speech titled "The Muscles We Have in Writing."

Caleb Williams started the weekend as one of 54 state champions and advanced to the top through three rounds of intense competition.

In his speech, Williams talked about the three democratic "muscles" America's citizens should use to keep the country strong: remembering, listening and speaking out. Once citizens flex these muscles, he said, "we can fulfill our attendant obligation as citizens and make use of what we have in writing."

Williams, 18, plans to attend Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Ky., this fall and major in political science and corporate communications. Williams represented Post 81 in Duncanville, Texas.

Second-place winner Alexander Captain of Miraga, Calif., earned a \$16,000 scholarship. Captain, a 17-year-old junior at Miramonte High School, was sponsored by Post 115 of Walnut Creek, Calif.

Tiffany Francisco, a 17-year-old se-

nior at Hampton Christian High School in Chesapeake, Va., finished third, earning a \$14,000 scholarship. Francisco was sponsored by Post 31, Hampton Roads, Va.

Each of the 54 contestants earned a \$1,500 scholarship. Nine semifinalists earned an additional \$1,500 scholarship.

The nine semifinalists and their Legion Post sponsors were: Candice Neal of Eva, Ala. (Morgan County Post 15); Monica Rice of Ellenwood, Ga. (Jerome Butler-Francis Battle Post 291); Miriam-Danielle Black of Decatur, Ind. (Adams Post 43); Tyler Cegler of Stevensville, Mont. (Fort Owen Post 94); Jamie Frazier of Monck's Corner, S.C. (Monck's Corner Post 126); and Brooks Reeves of Cheyenne, Wyo. (Francis E. Self Post 6).

The competition was conducted at the University Place Conference Center and Hotel on the campus of Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis.

In each round of the weekend competition, orators delivered a rehearsed eight-to 10-minute address on any aspect of the constitution, as well as a randomly assigned three- to five-minute oration on a constitutional topic, each without the benefit of notes and in front of several judges and a live audience.

The American Legion developed the contest to encourage young people to improve their communication skills and to study the U.S. Constitution.

Tom Stettin

Flag amendment revisits Congress

On Mar. 13, Sens. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and Max Cleland, D-Ga., along with Reps. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, R-Calif., and John Murtha, D-Pa., introduced in both chambers a proposed constitutional amendment that would return the right to protect their flag to the American people. (See "The Time is Now," page 40.)

National Commander Ray G. Smith welcomed the introduction of the constitutional amendment. "What we have here is not a Republican issue nor a Democratic issue; this is an American issue," Smith said. "We think members in both houses and on both sides of the aisle should join together in a show of true bipartisanship and pass the amendment. What they do will determine the legacy we pass to future generations of Americans."

The one-sentence amendment reads, "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." The amendment has more than 115 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and 45 in the Senate. Post-election analysis indicates the measure enjoys support from 64 Senators as well as 308 members of the House, well above the 290 needed for passage.

"There is no doubt what the people want," Smith said. "I urge Congress to heed its own advice and pass this amendment now."

During the 106th Congress, a flag-protection amendment passed overwhelmingly in the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 305-124. However, the initiative fell four votes short in the Senate.

In 1989, the U.S. Supreme Court took



Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, along with Sen. Max Cleland, D-Ga., introduced the flag amendment to both houses of Congress Mar. 13. Here Hatch addresses the Legion's Flag Amendment Conference in Washington.

from the American people the right to protect their flag by invalidating flag-protection laws in 48 states and the District of Columbia. To date, 49 state legislatures have passed resolutions asking Congress to pass an amendment and send it to the states for ratification.

For 2001, the Senate flag-protection amendment, SJ Res. 7, and HJ Res. 36, the companion bill in the House, have been referred to the Judiciary Committees of each chamber, where hearings on the measures are yet to be scheduled.

gion following the war, starting his employment Feb. 3, 1954.

Yager attended approximately 20 National Conventions, working in either a supply staff capacity or for Emblem Sales.

"Jack's loyalty, dedication and faithful service to his country and The American Legion is appreciated by the 4 million members of The American Legion family and countless others," said National Adjutant Robert W. Spanogle.



Barb Thurlow, a member of Post 101, Mountain Home, Idaho, listens to a presentation at the 2000 Legion College. Thurlow has taken what she learned during her week of training and is using it to benefit her Post and community.

Legionnaire helps abused victims

Barb Thurlow, a Legion College Class of 2000 graduate and Americanism Chairman of Post 101, Mountain Home, Idaho, is making a difference in her community.

Thurlow recently headed up a public service project for her Post to help the victims of domestic violence. In Thurlow's town, cases of domestic abuse are on the rise with as many as 19 occurring in one month.

With the endorsement of the Elmore County Domestic Violence Council and the Mountain Home Police Department, the Post conducted a cellular phone drive to collect old phones, batteries and chargers. Thurlow asked members of her Post for donations, then went to the community for help.

The Domestic Violence Council requested only 11 phones, but Post members donated that number themselves. Six more were donated from the community.

The phones were cleaned, charged and, with the permission of the police, tested for 911 access. They were then given to the council, which provided them to at-risk clients. Phones not needed by the council are donated to the local police department for use in other domestic cases.

The project will continue until the community's need is filled.

Yager retires after 47 years

Jack Yager, an employee at The American Legion National Headquarters, retired Feb. 28 after faithfully serving the Legion for 47 years.

A Korean War veteran, Purple Heart recipient and member of Post 465, Department of Indiana, Yager worked in the National Headquarters print shop for more than 39 years before spending the past eight years working in the Emblem Sales Division.

Yager is thought to be the first Korean War veteran to be hired by the Le-



San Antonio Posts welcome Legionnaires

Five American Legion Posts within 20 miles of downtown San Antonio are available for large and small events and special gatherings during the 83rd National Convention Aug. 24-30.

Those Posts, along with points of contact, are: Post 568, Commander Joe R. Chavez, (210) 734-4109; Post 579, Commander Roderick E. Johnston, (210) 674-8069;

Post 375, Commander Rick Holloway, (210) 633-2365; Post 667, Commander Robert L. Yost, (210) 658-2390; and Post 2, Commander Larry Garcia, (210) 561-2578.

Points of contact may change due to Post elections. Any questions concerning these Posts or others in the area can be directed to the Department of Texas at (512) 472-4138.

Shuttle service offers convention discounts

The shuttle company SATRANS is offering discount service between the airport and downtown San Antonio for members of The American Legion attending the 83rd National Convention there Aug. 24-30.

With individual seating, SATRANS offers easy-access 10- and 18-passenger mini-buses that comply with Americans with Disabilities Act design standards.

For more information, call (210) 281-9900 or visit the Web site at www.saairportshuttle.com.



Michigan Auxiliary President Brenda Dee, left, maps last-minute recruitment strategies with Department Commander Kenneth Dittenber, Post 556 Commander August Maasch and 7th District Auxiliary President Susan Kuefler.

Teamwork spawns revitalization

Legionnaire August Maasch discovered that revitalizing a Post can be as easy as asking for help.

Maasch, Commander of Merrick Potter Post 566 in Memphis, Mich., worried about the declining membership of his rural east-central Michigan Post. When membership dwindled to about two dozen, Maasch called Department Headquarters in Lansing for help.

The Department of Michigan has a strong New Post and Revitalization Committee charged with the task of assisting troubled Posts and providing support for start-ups. The committee has helped start more than 30 new Posts within the past two years and has assisted in the revitalization of another dozen or so.

According to Al Ford, the committee's chairman and Past Department Commander, a Legion Post in trouble of-

ten signals an Auxiliary unit that needs attention. Ford has been seeking opportunities to combine Legion and Auxiliary efforts to revitalize sagging membership.

Legion and Auxiliary teams from Michigan's 7th District, Department and National levels arrived at Memphis to join local Legion Post and Auxiliary unit members in a combined two-day workshop and recruiting effort.

A campaign of known Legion and Auxiliary prospects in four towns upped the roll from 36 to 76 Legionnaires and Auxiliary members. Maasch's goal is a membership in the triple digits.

Sherry McLaughlin, National Auxiliary Vice President, and Charlene Ashworth, National Auxiliary Membership Chairman, said the Legion-Auxiliary revitalization partnership at the Memphis Post can be used as a model for future efforts.

Benefits open to family members

The American Legion recently approved three insurance benefit plans, offering good insurance at an affordable rate. These plans are open not only to Legionnaires, SAL members and their spouses and children, but also to the parents of Legion and SAL members.

Insurance plans include the Small Business Group Insurance Plan, toll free at (800) 321-1998; the Market Basket Health Plan for members of the Legion family and their dependents, at (800) 323-2106; and a dental plan for self-employed Legionnaires or those working at small

companies where dental benefits are not offered, at (800) 621-3008 Ext. 45284. Each plan is backed by an insurance company rated excellent, or better, by A.M. Best, publishers of insurance information, including financial data, industry news and insurer ratings.

The American Legion also offers additional insurance programs available exclusively to Legionnaires and SAL members, such as life insurance and TRICARE supplements. Call (800) 542-5547 for more information about Legion insurance programs.

Legion honors Gulf War vets

A standing-room-only crowd of more than 300 attended The American Legion's "Reunion and Unity" tribute to nearly 700,000 U.S. veterans of the Persian Gulf War who helped free Kuwait from the grip of Iraqi occupation.

The forum, organized by the Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission's Gulf War Task Force, kicked off The American Legion's 41st Washington Conference March 10. The commemoration was a retrospective on perseverance in battle, the intractability of freedom and lessons America learned both about its troops and the institutions that produced them.

U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., who served as legal counsel for an Army medical service corps division in the Persian Gulf, was one of four members of Congress who received a Certificate of Appreciation from The American Legion acknowledging his active-duty service during the 1991 war. Reps. Jim Gibbons, R-Nev., Mark Kirk, R-Ill., and Van Hilleary, R-Tenn., also were honored.

Since the end of the war, The American Legion has been at the forefront of



National Commander Ray G. Smith presents U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., a Certificate of Appreciation during the "Reunion and Unity" tribute to Gulf War veterans Mar. 10.

advocacy on behalf of sick Gulf War veterans suffering from a variety of illnesses, some diagnosed and some mysterious. The commemoration included a discussion of the government's efforts to deal with sick veterans, efforts inspired in large measure by the Legion.

Legion programs earn awards

The American Legion was one of nine national associations to be honored recently with the American Society of Association Executives' Associations Advance America Award of Excellence.

The Legion won the AAA Award of Excellence for its "America's Veterans" video program and also was named to the Associations Advance America Honor Roll for 2001 for its Child Welfare Foundation grant program, which last fall distributed more than \$323,000 in assistance to 14 nonprofit organizations.

"Our Child Welfare Foundation is a small but effective one that is sure to benefit from the honor bestowed upon it," said National Commander Ray G. Smith. "Our goal for 'America's Veterans' is to have a copy in every school in the nation, and I am confident that the recognition given us by ASAE will help us reach our objective."

Created early last year, "America's Veterans" is a 23-minute video aimed at elementary- and middle-school audiences.

The video, which comes with a curriculum guide for teachers, features profiles of veterans of various wars. The veterans reflect on their own sacrifices and those of others with whom they served. The video was paid for by The American Legion and has been made available free of charge to teachers at more than 8,000 schools.

As an Award of Excellence winner, "America's Veterans" is automatically entered into consideration for the Summit Award, ASAE's highest honor. Summit Award winners will be honored at ASAE's 2001 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia Aug. 4-7 and at the Second Annual Summit Awards Dinner Sept. 25 in Washington, D.C.

Now in its 11th year, the AAA Awards recognize associations and industry partners that advance American society with innovative programs in education, skills training, standard-setting, business and social innovation, knowledge creation, citizenship and community service.

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Foreign-made medals

Delegate Richard H. Black of Virginia, a decorated Vietnam War veteran and retired Army colonel, had just finished speaking to a group of Virginia National Guardsmen returning from Bosnia who had been given a Virginia Commendation Medal. "They came around me and they were holding out the medals they had just gotten," he said. "They turned them over and, on the back, they read 'Made in China.' The Guardsmen were most distressed."

Black, who earned the Purple Heart in Vietnam, said he believes that China is our most likely foe in the future. He said, "Frankly, receiving a medal that's made by the people most likely to kill you in combat is not what people want." So he introduced a "Made in the USA" bill requiring Virginia military medals be made in America and have a notice to that effect stamped on the back. The bill passed.

He added, "The idea of having any military supplies or equipment produced in a country which will probably be at war with us someday is a big mistake. I hope we don't go to war and that we have good relations with China, but I see no signs of that. I see a very belligerent, very hostile country. When it comes to something as near and dear to soldiers' hearts as the medals they get for serving their country, they ought to be made right here at home in the United States."

Kyoto threatens readiness

When President George W. Bush surprised Environmental Protection Agency administrator Christine Todd Whitman by rejecting a plan to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, he once again signaled his opposition to the Kyoto Protocol, or global warming treaty. He also threw a lifeline to the U.S. military.

Carbon dioxide, or CO₂, blamed by environmentalists for causing global warming, stems mainly from our nation's use of oil and coal. The treaty, the terms of which have been unanimously rejected by the U.S. Senate, would require a 40-percent reduction in U.S. energy use and higher prices.

"The draconian restrictions pending under likely Kyoto rules would force major cutbacks in training for our armed forces that would imperil them in time of battle," said retired Army Gen. Charles A. Horner in a column in the *Houston Chron-*



Despite humanitarian efforts, North Korean children are subject to starvation due to misuse of food aid. Assistance from the West is merely propping up the communist regime.

North Korean aid jeopardized by nuclear program

Reflecting deep concern by the Bush administration, Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., said the United States needs to verify that North Korea has abandoned its nuclear-weapons program before giving the dictatorship further aid. Hyde, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, said the same applies to a potential agreement with North Korea on missile proliferation and deployment.

The track record is not good. Dr. Norbert Vollertsen, a German doctor who spent 18 months inside the country, has told Congress that Western humanitarian assistance and food aid is propping up the communist North Korean regime. He was expelled from the country after going

public with his charges.

He said the situation has improved in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital. "There's a nice casino," he said. "There's a nightclub. There are diplomatic shops for the elite and the high-ranking politicians and military." But in the countryside, where the children are starving, nothing has changed. He said, "When I came to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1999, there were pictures of starvation. And when I left the DPRK a year and a half later, it was the same situation. But in Pyongyang, there are more Mercedes-Benz cars than there are in Washington or Seoul, South Korea. They are incredibly rich in Pyongyang."

— C.K.

icle. "They also would limit drastically our ability to support our deployed forces."

Horner, former commander in chief of the U.S. Space Command, said this is because the treaty has an exemption only for fuel used in U.N.-approved military operations. "Put bluntly," he said, "the Kyoto Protocol will not allow the U.S. military to train adequately and could even preclude it from successfully defending our freedom and national interests unless the operations are preapproved by the United Nations and it involves multinational forces."

U.S. forces spread thin

In a fresh sign of how U.S. forces have been stretched to the breaking

point, a new chronology of U.S. military operations from 1990 to the present shows more than 100 different deployments. They include combat operations and peacekeeping, or humanitarian, missions. Sixteen are still ongoing.

The DoD-assembled chronology cites current operations in Yemen, Sierra Leone, East Timor, Iraq, Kosovo, Central America and Bosnia, as well as counterdrug activities throughout the entire Western Hemisphere.

The latest figures from the United Nations show a total of 888 U.S. personnel involved in U.N. peacekeeping missions as military observers, civilian police or troops.

— Cliff Kincaid

Why Don't Doctors Tell You These Facts About Diabetes?

(SPECIAL) – Here's important news for anyone with diabetes. A remarkable book is now available that reveals medically tested principles that can help you reduce insulin resistance, burn fat and greatly improve the complications associated with diabetes. People report **better vision, more energy, faster healing, regained feeling in their feet**, as well as a reduction of various risk factors associated with other diseases.

It's called the "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" and it was researched, developed and written by a leading nutrition specialist. It shows you exactly how nature can activate your body's built-in healers once you start eating the right combination of foods. It can work for both Type I and Type II diabetes and people report it has helped reduce their insulin resistance. It can give diabetics control of their lives and a feeling of satisfaction that comes from having normal blood sugar profiles.

The results speak for themselves. The "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" is based on research that many doctors may not be aware of yet. It tells you which delicious foods to eat and which to avoid. It also warns you of

the potential danger of certain so-called "diabetics" diets. Diabetics have written letters to the publisher calling this book "very outstanding"... "a tremendous help"... and saying it made "a difference in my life." The "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" is based on documented scientific principles that can help:

- **Eliminate ketones and give you more abundant energy**
- **Make blood sugar levels go from High Risk to Normal**
- **Stimulate scratches and scrapes to heal faster**
- **Improve eyesight**
- **Improve your balance**
- **Help numb feet regain a level of feeling**
- **Reverse neuropathy and resultant heel ulcers**

Improvement may be seen in other areas as well, such as **lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol and reduced triglyceride levels**. There may also be a reduction of other risk factors associated with: **heart attacks, stroke, retinopathy, kidney damage**.

What's more, it may help improve **short term memory** and make you feel **more**

alert and no longer chronically tired. Improvements of **double vision** or *diplopia* may also be experienced.

If you or someone you know have diabetes, this could be the most important book you'll ever read. As part of a special introductory offer, right now you can order a special press run of the "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" for only \$12.95 plus \$2.00 shipping. It comes with a 90 day money back guarantee. If you are not 100% satisfied, simply return it for a full refund...no questions asked.

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Free Agent Orange help line established

Vietnam War veterans now have a nationwide toll-free help line to answer their questions about Agent Orange exposure, health care and benefits. The new help line, (800) 749-8387, is part of continuing efforts to reach the veterans who served there, said the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Callers can speak directly to VA representatives Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST, or access a 24-hour automated system. They can leave voice-mail messages to have information sent to them or listen to recordings about exposure to Agent Orange, VA benefits, health care and disability compensation.

VA expects considerable interest in the help line because of a proposed policy that allows Vietnam War veterans with adult-onset type II diabetes to receive disability compensation for ongoing medical problems linked to Agent Orange or other herbicides during the war. VA recognizes 10 medical conditions as being associated with Agent Orange exposure.

A regulation to provide monthly compensation for Vietnam War veterans with adult-onset diabetes is expected later this year. VA estimates that approximately 200,000 Vietnam War veterans will receive service connection for their diabetes within the first five years under the new policy. About 36,000 veterans from all periods of service are already recognized as "service connected" for diabetes, VA said.

In addition to the toll-free number, VA has developed a specific Agent Orange Web page at www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/benefits/herbicide. For general information on VA benefits and programs, visit VA's Web site at www.va.gov.

Treasury targets veterans

The Treasury Department is sending letters to selected veterans, reminding them they owe the federal government and that money can be taken from other federal checks to settle their debts.

For the first time, portions of a monthly Social Security check can be withheld by the Treasury to settle debts that veterans owe to the Department of Veterans Affairs. VA has referred approximately 243,000 names of veterans to the Treasury Department with debts valued at more than \$75 million, VA said.

Federal Law states that when veterans owe more than \$25 to VA and the debts are more than 180 days overdue, VA officials must report the debts to the Treasury Department.

Veterans affected by withholding will always receive the first \$750 of each month's Social Security payment. Only 15 percent of the amount greater than \$750 can be withheld each month, VA said. Veterans can avoid any loss of Social Security or other federal payments by voluntarily settling their debts with VA.

The Treasury Department will notify veterans twice in writing about the anticipated deductions. The letters will include the name of the VA agency

that is owed the money and a point of contact who can answer questions regarding the delinquent debt.

The Treasury Department is responsible for collecting the debts from other sources of income, including income tax refunds, federal retired pay and now Social Security – but not Supplemental Security Income.

In the future, the Treasury Department will begin docking federal retired pay, military pay or retired military pay, railroad retirement benefits (but not Tier 2 benefits), Black Lung Program payments (Part B) and other payments made to individuals, the Treasury Department said.

Many veterans affected have been treated in VA medical facilities for health care not related to their military service. For that care and for some prescribed medication, they are responsible for copayments, VA said. Additionally, some recipients of disability compensation and VA pensions may fall into the Treasury offset program because of debts, usually for overpayment of their benefits.

Veterans with questions about whether they have VA debts should contact the VA medical centers where they received care.

'In Memory' honors Vietnam vets

Twenty eight veterans were inducted into the "In Memory" Honor Roll April 16 at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., increasing the total number of honorees to 750.

The annual "In Memory" Day ceremony recognizes men and women who have died prematurely due to non-combat injuries and emotional suffering caused directly by their service in the Vietnam War, said Jan C. Scruggs, president and founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.

"The Department of Defense has very specific parameters to allow only the names of the service men and women who died of injuries suffered in combat zones to be inscribed on the

Vietnam Veterans Memorial," Scruggs said. "The Memorial Fund's 'In Memory' program recognizes those veterans who have died as a result of their service but do not meet requirements for inclusion on The Wall."

Hundreds of family members and friends of Vietnam War veterans visited Washington to attend the spring ceremony, Scruggs said. During the ceremony, family members read aloud the names of their loved ones in chronological order by date of death. Family members then laid tributes at the black-granite panels corresponding to the honorees' dates of service in Vietnam – a symbolic joining near those comrades with whom they served.

WWII parachutists get citation

A 56-year oversight was corrected earlier this year when Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki presented the Presidential Unit Citation to survivors of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion.

The citation was presented to more than 100 members of the 551st in recognition of their role in the Battle of the Bulge during World War II. The parachute group also was credited with the first daylight combat jump in U.S. history and with capturing the first Nazi general in Europe during that time.

The 551st participated in a mass parachute jump into southern France Aug. 5, 1944. Shortly after the 6 p.m. jump, they captured German Gen. Ludwig Bieringer at his Dranguignan headquarters near La Motte.

The unit was deactivated Feb. 10, 1945, but it "never went away," Shinseki told the survivors attending the presentation. "It still exists today because its members are here with us today."

A recommendation was made to award the presidential citation at the time the 551st was deactivated, but no action was taken. The issue was resurrected in 1994 and efforts continued until the citation was approved earlier this year. The surviving veterans of the 551st added the battle streamer to the unit's colors, making six battle streamers on the Army colors.

The battle for which the 551st became famous began Dec. 16, 1944. By early January 1945, more than one-third of the unit's 826 men had been killed or wounded. Faced with a superior German force, the unit completed its objectives Jan. 7, 1945, by capturing the city of Rochelival, France, on the Salm River and retarding retreating Germans by closing off the bridge. The 551st killed more than 400 Germans and captured more than 300 prisoners while at



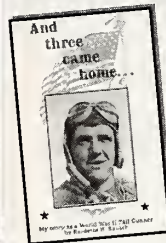
Joe Cicchinelli, a former scout with the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion, places a streamer on the Army colors during a ceremony honoring the men for their heroic efforts in the Battle of the Bulge. An unidentified veteran of the 551st watches. Photo U.S. Army

the same time suffering a 94-percent casualty rate.

The next day, Adolf Hitler ordered the first German army pullback from the Battle of the Bulge.

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The **National Reunion Registry** handles all reunion information services for *The American Legion Magazine*. **NRR**, a division of Military Information Enterprises, Inc., is a private organization that provides information about reunions, helps veterans locate old buddies and offers other special benefits to veterans and their families.

NRR maintains contact information on thousands of reunions and provides this information free of charge to veterans.

There are several ways to register reunions or check reunion listings with the National Reunion Registry. Please contact the organization directly by writing to **NRR/Reunions, PO Box 17118, Spartanburg, SC 29301**, by faxing (864) 595-0813 or via e-mail at information@militaryusa.com. Due to the large number of reunions, NRR cannot accept phone requests for reunion information.

To register a reunion, you should include the complete name of the

organization and branch of service with your request. The request should also include the reunion dates and city, along with a contact name and telephone number. Please also include a size estimate of the group.

Using the Internet is the quickest, most accurate way to access the reunion registry. You may check to see if your buddies are planning a reunion by visiting NRR's Web site at www.MilitaryUSA.com. To promote the best accuracy and fastest process when listing your reunion, complete the Reunion Registration Form available on the Web site.

LOCATING A BUDDY

MilitaryUSA.com offers many services for veterans, including tips and techniques for locating current or former military members. *How To Locate Anyone Who Is or Has Been in the Military: Armed Forces Locator Guide* is a practical guide to help people locate service members. The publication can be purchased by contacting MIE Publishing, P.O. Box 17118, Spartanburg, SC 29301 or by faxing (864) 595-0813.

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42nd Inf Div Rainbow, Wichita, KS, 7/9-16, Harvey Snap, (316) 283-4298, 1222ndinf@aol.com; **2nd Indianhead Div Assn**, Peoria, IL, 7/11-14, Jim Hinton, (727) 772-1804, JHinton748@aol.com; **52nd Sig Bn**, Corydon, IN, 7/11-14, Stewart Boaz, (812) 472-3941, oldmanboaz@cs.com; **22nd Inf, 3rd Bn, Co C**, Baton Rouge, LA, 7/11-15, Chuck Boyle, (504) 275-1792, apcho@aol.com; **264th FA Bn**, Florence, KY, 7/13-15, Bob Latz, (330) 493-4657, flatz@mindspring.com; **480th AAA AW Bn**, Palmetton, PA, 7/14-15, Samuel George, (610) 681-4459; **8th Cav**, 1st Bn Vietnam, Spokane, WA, 7/18-22, James Knafel, (219) 244-3864; **24th Inf Rgt Cbt Team**, Augusta, GA, 7/19-22, Mary Elliott, (609) 267-3875; **213th Ash Blackcats**, Las Vegas, 7/19-22, Eric Boyle, (913) 592-4350, eric@sunsetcruises.com; **C Co, 1st Bn, 52nd Inf**, 198th Light Inf Bde American Div, St. Louis, 7/20-21, Terry Wyrnick, m60gunner@hotmail.com

D Co, 2nd Bn, 16th Inf Rgt, 1st Inf Div, Woodstock, IL, 7/20-22, Don Oignan, (734) 525-0157, ddignan@ford.com; **167th Sig Co**, Las Vegas, 7/20-22, Steve Baldwin, (281) 452-3425, rsbsteve@aol.com; **892nd ORD HAM Co**, Limon, CO, 7/26-28, Fred Martin, (719) 763-2385; **196th LRRP**, E Co, 51st Inf LRRP American Div, G Co 75th Rangers, Gettysburg, PA, 7/26-30, Earl Toomey, (941) 542-4306, toomeyek1@aol.com; **125th AAA Gun Bn**, Columbus, OH, 7/27-29, Clarence Vollmer, (614) 866-2574; **Army Otter Caribou**, Corning, NY, 7/31-8/5, Bruce Silvey, (800) 526-8194, bsilvey@aol.com; **476th AAA AW Bn**, Tullahoma, TN, August, Edwin Geipel, (616) 429-3488; **79th Inf Div**, 904th FA, August, Bob Craig, (513) 831-4471; **501st Parachute Inf Rgt**, King of Prussia, PA, 8/2-5, Clair Hess, (610) 354-9612, gamburgey@gowebway.com

547th Eng Cbt Bn, Durham, NC, 8/2-5, Charles Jones, (360) 683-6994, ccjones@olypen.com; **276th Eng C Bn**, Richmond, VA, 8/5, Paul Moore, (804) 526-8306, coc276threunion@aol.com; **82nd Avn Div Assn**, Charleston, SC, 8/8-11, Reunion Planner, (910) 822-4534, abn82dassn@aol.com; **337th, 1338th Eng Cbt Bn**, Marietta, OH, 8/8-12, Sue Cockrell, (828) 685-3531; **157th Eng Cbt Bn**, Roanoke, VA, 8/10-12, Roland Clayton, (215) 675-0752; **125th FA**, Jackson, MN, 8/11, Bob Scoboda, (507) 847-3344, mannix@connect.com; **926th Sig Bn**, New Orleans, 8/16-18, Walter Rieker, (864) 654-9597, esrieker@innova.net; **11th AAA AW Halftrack Bn**, Sioux Falls, SD, 8/16-19, Ed Larners, (605) 694-2788, edhlarners27@hotmail.com; **999th Armd FA Bn**, Kenner, LA, 8/17-19, George Cureaux, (504) 535-2441

Society of 1st Inf Div, Nashville, TN, 8/17-21, Ed Burke, (888) 324-4733, soc1stid@aol.com; **20th Coast Arty Harbor Defense**, Corydon, IN, 8/18-19, Cecil Fravel, (812) 738-2623; **39th Eng Cbt Bn**, Branson, MO, 8/18-20, John Barden, (956) 724-3029, jbfaco@hotmail.com; **84th Inf Div Railsplitters**, Branson, MO, 8/18-21, Daryl Mitchell, (417) 725-1053; **701st Maint Co C Vietnam**, Nashville, TN, 8/19-22, William Rabe, compco701maint@gateway.net; **70th, 554th AAA Gun Bn**, Oolilywood, TN, 8/19-23, James Harden, (941) 377-5295, cnnbagedb@webtv.net; **80th Inf Div**, Hampton, VA, 8/22-25, Clarence Brockman, (724) 926-2044, afereens@webtv.net; **China-Burma-India Hump Pilots Assn**, Crystal City, VA, 8/22-26, Jan Thies, (573) 785-2420, jancbi@ms-1.com; **1st MP Co, 1st Inf Div**, El Paso, TX, 8/23-26, James Ware, (915) 593-0267, jware12753@aol.com

504th MP Bn, Dayton, OH, 8/23-25, Ronnie Melgaard, (334) 298-8961, wccradrun@aol.com; **17th Avn Div WWII**, Branson, MO, 8/23-26, Edward Siergiej, (203) 748-3958, esiergiej@aol.com; **8603rd, 3rd ASA**, Reno, NV, 8/23-26, Larry Eckard, (828) 256-6008; **95th Inf Div Assn**, Oklahoma City, OK, 8/23-27, Lester Wolf, (708) 458-3047; **37th Inf Div**,

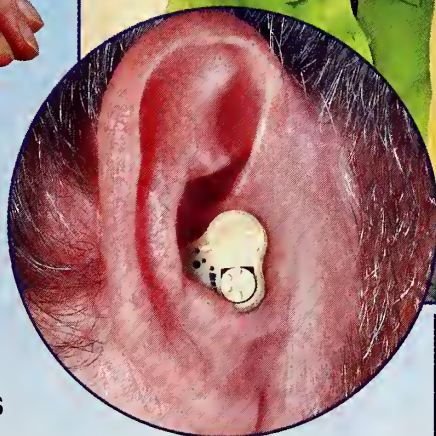
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148th Inf Rgt, Camp Petty, OH, 8/24-25, Henry Oonnell, (317) 849-0979, hdonnell@msn.com; **Army Sec Agency Arizona Chapter**, Tucson, AZ, 8/24-26, Dave Waldmann, (520) 378-0159, dwardmann@sinoso.com; **280th FA Bn WWII**, Las Vegas, 8/26-30, Leo Holnstat, (626) 339-7168; **104th Inf Div Natl Assn Timberwolf**, Atlanta, 8/27-9/3, Glen Lytle, (316) 636-5334, infdiv104@aol.com; **36th Inf Div, 141st Inf Rgt**, Irving, TX, 8/29-9/2, Leonard Wilkerson, (903) 489-1644, len36div@aol.com; **101st, 503rd MP Bn WWII**, Niagara Falls, NY, 8/29-9/6, Harvey Miller, (727) 786-3529, fdny158@juno.com; **89th Inf Div, 354th Inf Rgt**, Colorado Springs, CO, 8/30-9/1, Larry Berg, (719) 576-4968, hb354@aol.com; **79th Inf Div, 315th Inf Rgt**, Chapel Hill, NC, 8/30-9/2, Les Brantingham, (616) 657-3078, bthelma79@aol.com; **39th Cbt Eng WWII**, Hudson, OH, 8/30-9/2, Stanley Gasawski, (618) 397-3925

101st Abn Div, 63rd Chem Co, Monteagle Mountain, TN, 8/30-9/3, David Lowrie, (931) 779-2220, dlowrie@blo-mand.net; **185th, 194th FA**, Little Amana, IA, 8/31-9/3, Raymond Behr, (563) 659-3683; **1st Cav Div HQ Det**, Belleville, IL, September, John Kronenberger, (618) 277-2311, skronen266@aol.com; **74th Coast Arty Anti-Aircraft Rgt Gun Bn**, Hagerstown, MO, September, Al Greene, (865) 932-7719; **18th Surg Hosp**, Washington, September, Marge McGinnis, (253) 759-1458, margemcg@worldspy.net; **569th AAA AW Bn WWII**, Norfolk, VA, September, John Bradshaw III, (401) 884-5674, apo569@home.com; **28th Inf Div, 109th Inf Rgt**, Ft. Indiantown Gap, PA, 9/5-8, George Bunnell, (802) 229-9260, jmdubois@aol.com; **86th Inf Div Blackhawk**, Philadelphia, 9/5-9, Robert Bookbinder, (954) 974-3511, carconed@aol.com

103rd Inf Div, Grand Rapids, MI, 9/5-9, Betty Ellsworth, (517) 688-9249; **106th Inf Div Assn**, Arlington, VA, 9/5-10, Marion Ray, (618) 377-3674, raybugleboy24@aol.com; **34th Air Depot Grp**, Dayton, OH, 9/6-8, Joseph Kenney, (309) 925-3459, greer701as@aol.com; **235th FA Obsn Bn**, Havenport, IA, 9/6-8, Robert Gamboe, (877) 473-4155; **100th Inf Div Assn WWII**, Tampa, FL, 9/6-9, Henry B. Williams, (803) 438-2647, hbw2@procast.net; **11th Armd Div, 55th Armd Inf Bn**, Co B, Amana Colonies, IA, 9/6-9, Gene Foster, (641) 858-2158; **14th Armd Div**, Rapid City, SD, 9/6-9, Verlon Hofer, (605) 647-2280, vmhofer@dtg.com; **254th FA Bn**, Ashtabula, OH, 9/7-9, Earle Schwark, (440) 884-4323; **89th Chem Mortar Bn**, Niagara Falls, NY, 9/7-9, Richard McLennand, (412) 331-3802; **85th Inf Div, 338th Inf Rgt**, Co E, Ann Arbor, MI, 9/7-9, Scott Street, (734) 483-7490, ted_street@online.emich.edu

77th Ord Depot Co, Waltham, MA, 9/7-9, Lowell Medin, (847) 359-4194; **14th Cbt Eng Bn**, Branson, MO, 9/7-9, Stanley Schwartz, (859) 498-4567, shs313@msn.net; **832nd Eng Avn Bn**, Chilliothe, MO, 9/8, Leroy Stuehm, (402) 331-6343; **94th AAA AW Bn Sp**, Copperas Cove, TX, 9/8-10, Glenn Hawley, (360) 733-0433, chainsawhr@home.com; **4th Armd Div**, Myrtle Beach, SC, 9/9-15, Joseph Barto, (770) 418-1421, jbarto1354@aol.com; **191st Sig Repair Co**, Newport, RI, 9/10-12, John Thomas, (517) 894-0592, jethomas@con-centric.net; **Fl. Richardson Alaska Vets**, New Orleans, 9/10-14, Alex Franchuk, (701) 282-4276, eajames@earthlink.net; **51st Sig Bn**, Utica, NY, 9/11-13, Glenn Carpenter, (419) 738-3369, icorp@bright.net; **787th MP Bn**, Bellevue, OH, 9/11-13, Harry Rinehart, (215) 855-2928, ikessnowball@aol.com; **233rd AAA Searchlight Bn HQ A/B**, Louisville, KY, 9/11-13, Robert Tribble, (502) 255-7409, rstrib@glou.com

4th Trans Co, 152nd Trans Co, Ft. Benning, GA, 9/12-15, Jimmy Huntington, joh152chfm@aol.com; **2nd Armd Div Assn**, Buffalo, NY, 9/12-15, Roy Ruffner, (610) 678-7251, info@2ndarmoredhollowwheels.com; **56th Ord Heavy Maint Co Assn**, Charleston, SC, 9/13-15, Herbert Peppers, (615) 883-1417; **16th Armd Div**, Cedar Rapids, IA, 9/13-15, Edward Krushesni, (609) 978-0490; **73rd AAA AW Bn (SP)**, El Paso, TX, 9/13-15, Raymond Webb, (540) 775-0452; **ASA Korea**, Camp Hill, PA, 9/13-16, Andrew Kavalesk, (717) 838-5546, andykasa@paonline.com; **444th Eng Base Depot Co**, Gouldsboro, PA, 9/13-17, Charles Hoye, (505) 392-7811, newsmen@leaconet.com; **3rd Inf Div Society**, Phoenix, AZ, 9/13-19, Lawrence Driscoll, (630) 964-0634, alhair2@juno.com; **41st Inf Div, 163rd Inf Rgt**, Helena, MT, 9/14-16, Leroy Michelson, (406) 442-1147, jgupshaw@juno.com

77th Evac Hosp, Columbus, OH, 9/14-16, Thomas Gerlach, (937) 836-2045, mocpgc@juno.com; **472nd MP Co**, San Diego, 9/14-17, Roger Bassetti, (480) 895-7985, bassetti@amug.org; **13th Inf Rgt Assn WWII**, Philadelphia, 9/15-17,

George Krist, (440) 235-9862; **19th Cbt Eng Rgt WWII**, Charleston, SC, 9/16-20, Milan Glumac, (843) 406-4662; **553rd FA, 18th Rgt, 3rd Bn**, Branson, MO, 9/17-19, Harold Holland, (909) 678-7628, holland@computer-caf.net; **CID Agents Assn**, Charleston, SC, 9/18-23, Louise Head, (706) 798-0588, louisesh592@aol.com; **838th AAA AW Bn**, Two Rivers, WI, 9/19-22, Al Malley, (920) 793-1456, afmaly@powercom.net; **65th Armd Field Bn**, Eiko, NV, 9/19-23, Wallace Eckdahl, (612) 929-4078, aeckdahl@isd.net; **792nd AAA AW Bn**, New Castle, IN, 9/20-22, Homer Yeakle, (765) 662-7716, hayeakle@aol.com; **45th Inf Div Assn Thunderbirds**, Oklahoma City, 9/20-22, Raul Trevino, (210) 681-9134; **509th Eng Co (Panel Bridge)**, Dallas, 9/20-22, Richard Trapp, (402) 759-3659; **17th Air Cav, 7th Sqdn**, St. Louis, 9/20-23, Jose Martinez, (314) 423-7910, jimartinez69@home.com

3rd Inf Rgt "The Old Guard", Arlington, VA, 9/20-23, Brett Reistad, (703) 361-1730, reistadb@b.com; **45th Inf Div, 180th Inf Rgt Assn**, Oklahoma City, 9/20-23, Larry Traw, (580) 924-6693, gbear@redriverok.com; **796th MP Bn**, Charleston, SC, 9/20-24, William Meck Jr., (301) 868-5604, billandgerimeck796mp@starpower.net; **325th AAA S/L Bn HQ A/B/C Btrys**, Louisville, KY, 9/21-23, Tom Moak, (601) 833-7807, tlm@tislinc.com; **I Corps Football Team**, New Orleans, 9/21-24, Duane Mattheis, (952) 942-0892, dmattheis@earthlink.net; **45th Inf Div, 179th Inf Rgt**, Oklahoma City, 9/23-29, Charles Nace, (903) 583-2802, tbird@fannielelectric.com; **11th Eng**, Williamsburg, VA, 9/25-27, Robert Tippett, (615) 885-7872; **344th Serv Sqdn**, Branson, MO, 9/26-29, Allan Sebastian, (253) 850-3089, als344ss@aol.com

29th Inf Rgt, Ft. Benning, GA, 9/26-30, Frank Plass, (706) 561-0774, barfield@benning.army.mil; **7th Base Army Far East Postal**, Branson, MO, 9/27-30, Donald Bahr, (262) 552-8545; **35th Inf Div 134th Inf Rgt**, Orlando, FL, 9/27-30, James Graff, (217) 445-2570; **Army Sec Agency Chitose**, San Antonio, 9/27-30, Gerald Koula, (210) 650-4573, jkoula@prodigy.net; **33rd Inf Div Assn**, Albuquerque, NM, 9/27-10/1, Bill Endicott, (425) 741-3549, wilbil2@gte.net; **7th Sig Bn**, Nashville, TN, 9/28-30, Buck Service, (517) 823-3447, salmagundi@tds.net; **804th Eng Avn Bn**, New Orleans, 9/30-10/2, Frank Ceriani, (724) 843-2123, ceriani@bellatlantic.net; **1st Inf Div, 1st Eng Cbt Bn**, Asheville, NC, 9/30-10/3, Robert Ayrton, (860) 442-9782, eayrton@uconect.net

COAST GUARD

USCGC Winona, WPG 65 WHEC 65, Port Angeles, WA, 9/7-9, Cliff Rocheleau, (360) 582-0925, roch@olypen.com; **USCG Duane, WPG/WHEC 33**, Charleston, SC, 9/13-15, Paul Turner, (518) 287-1900, paulturn@midtel.net; **Patrol Frigate Assn, USS New Bedford**, PF 71, Reno, NV, 9/16-21, George Schordine, (631) 475-3115; **USCGC Castle Rock, WAVP 383**, Boston, 9/21-22, Eugene Calmon, (302) 947-9645, castlrk383@aol.com

JOINT

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots, Denver, 7/2-6, Donald Joyce, (407) 870-5367, webmaster@vhpa.org; **Women's Overseas Serv League**, Ft. Mitchell, KY, 7/6-9, Gertrude Gay, (502) 636-5372; **USN Aircrew Surv Equip Sch Grads**, Pensacola, FL, 7/19-22, Lisa Harrington, (850) 946-2291, prlpn@aol.com; **Kansas Vietnam Vets**, El Dorado, KS, 7/20-22, Larry Keune, (918) 836-0489, larrykeune@aol.com; **407th Civil Affairs Desert Storm Assn**, Wiona, MN, 7/27-29, Michael Stalka, (507) 452-9499, mmmstalka@hbc.com; **Korean War Vets of Massachusetts**, Lowell, MA, 8/17-19, Edward Fonseca, (978) 924-5155; **Korean War Vets of Nebraska**, Columbus, NE, 8/25-27, William Kline, (402) 564-6196, wrkline@megavision.com; **China/Burma/India Vets**, Oklahoma City, 8/27-9/2, Melvin McMullen, (909) 886-1162; **Natl Assn of Fleet Yut Sailors**, Chicago, 8/30-9/2, Ralph Smith, (504) 887-4603; **USS Antietam, CV/CVA/CVS 36/CG 54**, Norfolk, VA, 9/12-16, Bill Hiebert, (703) 768-6419, william.hiebert@worldnet.att.net

MARINES

11th Amph Tract Bn, St. Louis, 6/1-3, James Hearing, (217) 423-6065; **Khe Sanh Vets**, Chicago, 7/3-7, Mike Worth, (847) 296-5979, mw861-a@msn.com; **1st Mar Div**, Orlando, FL, 7/4-8, Jerry Brown, (703) 803-3195, oldbreed@aol.com; **USMC Mustang Assn**, New Orleans, 8/22-26, Bill Max, (800) 321-8762, topmustang@aol.com; **Subic Bay**

Mar, Cromwell, CT, 8/23-26, Jim Bassett, (760) 757-3836, jimbsm@nctimes.net; **1st Mar Div, 7th Mar, 3rd Bn**, Split Rock, PA, September, Eric Bubeck, (410) 757-8613; **6th Mar Div Assn**, St. Louis, 9/2-9, Vince Mathews, (651) 455-6700; **China Marine Assn**, Albuquerque, NM, 9/5-9, Arthur Goetz, (301) 742-0930; **MCRD San Diego Pli 3077**, Chicago, 9/7-9, Al Joyner, (319) 827-2148; **5th Mar, 3rd Bn Korea**, St. Louis, 9/11-15, Al Bettiga, (520) 229-0657, albet2@juno.com; **4th Mar Div, 1st Bn**, San Diego, 9/13-17, Lonnie Young, (501) 751-1084, usmc484@juno.com; **9th SBC Quantico**, Arlington, VA, 9/17-21, Herb Hart, (703) 912-6124, ninthsbcc@yahoo.com; **7th Eng Bn FMF**, Arlington, VA, 9/20-23, Bill Bates, (703) 897-0283, patnbill@aol.com; **VMF (A) 531 Gray Ghost**, San Diego, 9/20-23, Oave Kassebaum, (858) 459-6088, kass6088@aol.com

VMF (N) 541, Rosemont, IL, 9/20-24, John Devine, (570) 875-0898; **Naval Ammo Depot Mar Barracks**, Hawthorne, NV, 9/21-23, Edward Engel, (775) 945-3563; **3rd Mar Div, 1st Bn**, Irving, TX, 9/26-30, Kenneth Martin, (800) 328-8439, hatch101@aol.com; **3rd Mar Div**, Irving, TX, 9/26-30, Bill Krueger, (703) 451-3844; **3rd Mar Div, 3rd JASCO**, Chicago, 9/27-30, Donald Famham, (708) 447-5403, drfam@webtv.net; **VMBS 333**, Newport Beach, CA, 9/30-10/4, Robert Ramsay, (949) 675-1693

NAVY

AP Trans Reunion Grp, USS Gen. William Mitchell, AP 114, **USS Gen. Harry Taylor**, AP 145, **USS Gen. J.C. Breckinridge**, AP 145, **USS Adm. W.S. Benson**, AP 120, **USS Gen. George Randall**, AP 115, **USS Gen. W.H. Gordon**, AP 117, **USS Gen. W.P. Richardson**, AP 118, **USS Gen. William Weigel**, AP 119, **USS Gen. M.B. Stewart**, AP 140, **USS Adm. W. L. Capps**, AP 121, **USS Adm. E.W. Eberle**, AP 123, **USS Adm. C.F. Hughes**, AP 124, **USS Adm. H.T. Mayo**, AP 125, **USS President Monroe**, AP 104, **USS Golden City**, AP 169, **USS Gen. H.F. Hodges**, AP 144, Norfolk, VA, 6/7-10, Chuck Ulrich, (516) 747-7426; **USS Warren**, APA 53, Kansas City, MO, 6/12-16, Warren Loffstedt, (913) 722-0672; **USN Cruiser Sailors Assn**, Seattle, 6/13-18, B. Brownell, (360) 755-9104; **USS Preble**, DD 345/DM 20, Seattle, 6/13-24, Eugene Wamsley, (513) 248-4026, genew15@juno.com

IUWG 1-5, Ft. Mitchell, KY, 6/28, James Meehan Jr., (561) 287-4361, jemtg@earthlink.net; **USS South Dakota**, BB 57, Sioux Falls, SD, 7/3, Howard Barthoff, (804) 740-7652; **USS Safeguard**, ARS 25, Duncan, OK, 7/4, Danny Mackey, (580) 252-5651, mpickup@texhoma.net; **USS Orleck**, OO 886, Seattle, 7/4-8, Robert Orleck, (802) 728-9806, bob@ussorleck.com; **USS James K. Polk**, SSBN SSN 645, Groton, CT, 7/5-7, Mike Lame, (860) 886-1889, mlame@ssbn645.com; **USS Fort Marion**, LSD 22, Denver, 7/8, John Hardy, (303) 674-6705; **USS Belle Grove**, LSD 2, Omaha, NE, 7/8-15, Lester Mauldin, (515) 285-7210, ticoen@email.msn.com; **USS Biddle**, DLG/CG 34, Longview, TX, 7/12-14, James Treadway, (903) 643-8719, treadwa@flash.net; **NMCC 8**, Port Hueneme, CA, 7/19-22, Ronald Dougal Sr., (480) 807-3016, douglars@aol.com

Vietnam Era Seabees, Port Hueneme, CA, 7/19-22, Ed Kloster, (625) 280-9495, mcb@earthlink.net; **USS Pittsburgh**, SSN 720, Groton, CT, 7/20-22, Anthony Lundgreen, (712) 274-2737, tony.lundgren@gateway.com; **USS Boston**, CA69 CAG1/SSN703, Andover, MA, 7/20-22, Arthur Hebert, (603) 672-8772; **NMCC 6**, Milford, MA, 7/20-24, John Bevier, (231) 839-2011, jbevier@micweb.net; **USS Brinkley Bass**, DD 887, Ft. Mitchell, KY, 7/25-31, Bob Shetron, (626) 335-4034; **USS Grouper**, SS/SSK/AGSS 214, Bremerton, WA, 7/26-29, Edwin Soriano, (360) 692-4344, edsoriano@yahoo.com; **VR 52/62**, Detroit, Port Clinton, OH, 7/27-29, Bill Bormusch, (727) 862-6343, adcsbill@juno.com; **USS Ogden**, LPD 5, Branson, MO, August, Michael Jackson, (417) 334-2353, mikefrankjac@earthlink.net; **USS Albany**, CA 123/CG 10, Cincinnati, 8/1-6, Jack Castle, (513) 574-8937, president@ussalbany.org

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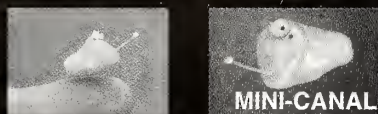
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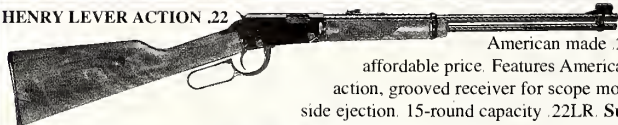
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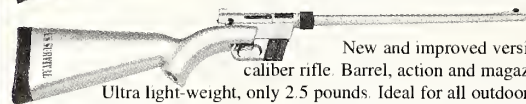
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"Roy, please - take the penalty."

Dumb and Dumber

Two men were working beside a road. One would dig a hole and the other would fill it in. A passerby asked what was going on. "Oh," one of the men replied, "we were sent here to plant trees. But the man who puts the tree in the hole is out sick today."

— Submitted by George Creel, Gaston, N.C.

Have It Your Way

An elderly woman who died requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she said, "They didn't take me out when I was alive. I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead."

— Submitted by George Geile, Farmington, Mo.



"They're more advanced than I thought. It only took him five seconds to refold that map."

Ready to Rumble

Sign seen at a muffler shop: "No appointments necessary. We hear you coming."

— Submitted by James F. Brady, Mason, Ohio

Pee-Wee Wages

I take my paycheck to the bank every month. It's too small to go by itself.

— Submitted by John J. Wilczynski, Susanville, Calif.

Good Question

If a man speaks in a forest and no woman is around to hear him, is he still wrong?

— Submitted by Gary Fenstermaker, Gravois Mills, Mo



"Why don't you people keep more money on hand? Yesterday I got three checks back marked "insufficient funds.""



"Another credit card application."

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